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Pope Benedict

INTERESTING  
LETTERS  
OF POPE  
CLEMENT XIV.  
(ANGANELLI.)

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,  
ANECDOTES OF HIS LIFE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH EDITION PUB-  
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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L O N D O N :

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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AN E C D O T E S

OF

G A N G A N E L L I,  
C L E M E N T XIV.

**A**LTHOUGH the Chair of Saint Peter is not looked upon with the same reverence in this country at present, as it was formerly, yet the Sovereign Pontiff still holds such a rank among the Powers on the Continent, that we cannot help being astonished to see a man of the most obscure birth, in our own days, arrive at the honour of wearing the triple Crown; and in the mysterious ways of Providence, a petty Monk of the Order of Saint Francis

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acquire sufficient power to annihilate the mighty Order of the Jesuits, those haughty sons of St. Ignatius, whose cabals and intrigues had made them formidable for ages to every Court in Europe, and enabled them to establish a powerful well regulated Sovereignty in another hemisphere.

However extraordinary it may appear, it is not the less true, that the son of a physician, John-Vincent-Antonio Ganganelli, who was born in the year 1705, in the little town of St. Arcangelo, near Rimini, was promoted to the highest rank of the Church, and was elected Pope at a time when the Court of Rome was involved in the deepest distress, from its quarrels with the Kings of France, Spain, Portugal, and Naples.

It has almost always been observed, that those men who have arrived at power and consequence with the world, have emitted some of those  
sparks

sparks of genius during their infancy, which announced their future advancement ; and Clement XIV. is said to have given some very signal proofs of genius, application, and love of learning, at a very early period.

We are told that his parents were surprised to see that none of the amusements with which other children were pleased, could ever engage him ; but they were happy to find him always with a book in his hand. He began his education at Rimini, and acquired the Latin language so soon, that at twelve years of age he had an opportunity of addressing a compliment to the Bishop of Rimini in that language, who was so struck with it, that he foretold Ganganelli would one day be of great service to the cause of Religion.

At the age of eighteen he left Rimini, to commence his Noviciate in the Order of St. Francis, at Urbino, at

which time he took the name of *Francis Laurence*; and very soon acquired as much credit in the Cloister, as he had formerly done at School.

He then studied Philosophy and Theology at Pesaro, Recanati, Fano, and Rome; and from being a scholar very soon became a master, and taught the opinions of Scotus, without being a slavish adherent to all his dogmas. He was much beloved by his pupils, while he taught Philosophy and Theology, at Ascoli, Bologna, and Milan; and at the age of thirty-five was called to Rome by his Superior, to teach Theology in the College of St. Bonaventura.

Though every town in Italy had some men of genius who owed their instruction to Ganganelli, he wished to remain immured in his Cloister; but his talents could not be concealed, and he must have soon risen to be General of his Order, if he had not assiduously

duously prevented his Brethren from giving their voices in his favour; though, at the same time, their implicit confidence in him was such, that he generally obtained their votes for whomsoever he thought the most capable: and Father Colombini declared, that he owed the honour of being General to the recommendation of Ganganelli.

Familiar conversation, amusing books, and solitary walks, were his usual relaxations, when he found himself exhausted by intense studies. As if merit alone was not a sufficient title to the admiration of contemporaries and posterity, something marvellous must be introduced into the characters of great men; and in such a country as Italy, it is not surprising that the prophecy of a Friar should gain credit, who is said to have come to Ganganelli, during one of his solitary walks, and falling at his feet, to have

a 3 begged



begged his benediction, as he foresaw that he would one day be Pope; telling him, at the same time, that he would die a violent death.

Though Ganganelli was much of a Recluse, he was visited in his Cell by the most eminent for rank and learning; and similarity of genius recommended him to the agreeable Lambertini (Benedict XIV.) who appointed him one of the Council of the Holy Office, observing, *that he joined an amazing memory to extensive learning; and what is more agreeable, added he, he is a thousand times more modest than the most ignorant, and so chearful, that it could not be supposed that he had ever lived in retirement.*

One day, when Ganganelli was going to Assisio, where the Founder of his Order was born and buried, he joined a Countryman upon the road. After an hour's conversation, the Peasant,



sant, who had been very attentive, said, *It is a pity that you are only a Lay-Brother* (judging from the negligence of his dress); *for it appears to me, that if you had studied, you might have been another Sixtus Quintus. I have his picture at home, and I think you have just his sly look.*

The Italians have the story of Sixtus Quintus so strongly imprinted upon their minds, that even the Country-people are always talking of him, and instilling into the minds of their children the hopes of being Pope, because Sixtus Quintus was elevated from the meanest condition to be Sovereign Pontiff.

It was high time that Honours should come in quest of Ganganelli, who had always so solicitously avoided, that a kind of compulsion was necessary to make him accept, them. The appretiators of true merit being willing to do credit to the Sacred Col-

VIII ANECDOTES OF GANGANELLI,  
lege, recommended him to Clement  
XIII. by telling him, that Ganganelli  
*was most humble, learned, and diligent,  
and that it would be doing honour to the  
Purple to make him Cardinal.*

The Sovereign Pontiff was easily  
prevailed upon. Besides its being agree-  
able to have worthy people recom-  
mended to him, he knew the merits  
of the Counsellor of the Holy Office,  
both from his own observation, and  
the attention of his predecessor Bene-  
dict XIV.

Cardinal Rezzonico, the Pope's  
Nephew, sent immediately to the Con-  
vent of the Holy Apostles for Ganga-  
nelli, that he might announce the in-  
tentions of the Pope.

After having asked him, if he was  
conscious to himself that he had dis-  
charged his duty properly, and had  
nothing to reproach himself with, he  
proceeded to tell him, in a manner  
sufficient

sufficient to intimidate him, “ that a  
 “ number of things had been said of  
 “ him to the Holy Father ; — that  
 “ from the dread of his being too  
 “ much affected with it, he hesitated  
 “ to inform him of the orders of his  
 “ Holiness ; but he could not help  
 “ letting him know that it was the  
 “ Pope’s pleasure, that he should ab-  
 “ lutely—yes, absolutely—be made  
 “ Cardinal.”

Ganganelli was thunderstruck at the unravelling of the suspense he was thrown into by the manner of the Cardinal, who made him imagine, at first, that somebody had prepossessed his Holiness against him ; and falling at his feet, said, *It is no affectation of humility, but a perfect conviction of my own unworthiness, which engages me to declare to you, that I by no means deserve this honour. I protest to you, that this promotion will do no credit to his Holiness, and will raise envy, which must*

*disturb my quiet. If the Pope wishes to dignify our Order with the Purple, there are more than ten persons in our House, who, in every respect, are more deserving of this singular favour.*

The Cardinal replied, that his Holiness having foreseen his unwillingness, had positively ordered him to submit, under pain of disobedience. Ganganelli could no longer refuse, and went trembling to acquaint the Brotherhood with the news. *His Holiness, says he, has appointed me a Cardinal, but do not you startle at this new dignity. I will continue always to live with you, like one of you, always as your friend and servant, nor shall you ever perceive that I have changed my condition.*

It was on the 24th Sept. 1759, that he became a Member of the Sacred College; and tho' he employed the twenty thousand livres given yearly by the  
Pope

Pope to the Cardinals of the Religious Orders to support the rank, yet he was neither less poor nor less modest than he had been formerly, and kept his word with his Brotherhood most steadily. If he quitted his Cell to take an apartment in the first Dormitory, it was because he was often obliged to receive visits of ceremony. An English Peer, who frequently visited him, used to say, *I cannot find the Cardinal Ganganelli; I find him only a Friar, filled with humility.*

It is said, that a General of one of the Religious Orders, having been to visit him, left a bill upon his table for four thousand Roman crowns payable at sight; he immediately sent it after him, declaring positively, that he knew no other riches but poverty: besides, it would lay him under obligations, and he was unwilling to contract any new engagements.



His learning and knowledge were far from being limited. He did not confine his studies to Theology and the Canon Law, but was well acquainted with the belles-lettres, politics, and sound philosophy, and even found instruction in his very amusements.

Neither the closeness of his retirement, nor the assiduity of his application, made any impression upon the natural gaiety of Ganganelli. *Every man, says he, has some wealth which is his natural inheritance, and mine is cheerfulness, which is the only patrimony my parents left me, but which I value more than all the treasures of this world.*

He had a great love for foreigners, more particularly for the French, and used frequently to repeat with pleasure an incident which happened while he was Friar at Bologna. He met in his Cloister an agreeable young  
petit-



petit-maitre just come from Lyons, who said to him, *It is only for want of something to do, Father, that I am walking here, for I can't endure the Monks.* Perhaps, sir, replied Ganganelli, you may like them better in the Refectory; and if so, I intreat you to come and take some refreshment. He accepted the offer, and they entered into a conversation, with which the young man was so pleased, that he remained two months at Bologna, only for the pleasure of seeing Ganganelli, and by his persuasion returned to his friends, from whom he had run away, and by whom he was tenderly beloved. Ganganelli furnished him likewise with money for his journey, and did him all the offices of a real friend.

Notwithstanding the strength of genius and uncommon good qualities of Ganganelli attracted almost universal homage,

homage, yet there was no room to imagine that he ever would be chosen Pope. Besides the freedom with which he had given his opinion with regard to some proceedings of the Court of Rome, which did not gain him the goodwill of the Cardinals, he had given advice so opposite to the sentiments of the Pontiff and his Secretary of State, on the subject of Parma and the affair of the Jesuits, that he was no longer consulted. Clement XIII. was very well disposed, but he had the misfortune to lose his Secretary of State, and to choose a successor, who was too much the declared friend of the Jesuits; and this very soon produced some disagreeable consequences. Portugal redoubled her complaints, and the affair of Parma completed the mischief; the King of France seized Avignon, and the King of Naples, Benevento.

Ganganelli

Ganganelli was terrified at the storm which was gathering on all sides, and saw the depth of the tomb that was to bury the Roman glory, if no endeavours were used to calm the rage of, or if they persisted in opposing, the Kings.

Clement XIII. seeing himself pressed by the Houses of Bourbon and Braganza, who earnestly insisted on the suppression of the Jesuits, at last appointed a meeting of the Consistory, that he might acquaint them with the necessity of submitting to the offended Kings; but the preceding night, on the 3d of February, he unexpectedly died. His death, which struck his party with dismay, proved a consolation to the Romans, who were chagrined at the loss of Avignon and Benevento, and, seeing the rage of the powerful Sovereigns ready to burst upon their heads, had no hopes but in a new reign. The death  
of

of every Pope occasions matter both of joy and sorrow.

The meeting of the Conclave in such a critical situation, was like a clouded sky, or rather a tempest. The Cardinals met; almost all of them, however, were of different opinions. Some were for chusing a Pontiff who would struggle against the power of the Kings; while others were equally desirous of electing one that would prove agreeable to them: both parties disputed with great zeal.

The choice of a Pope is always a work of labour, on account of the number of voices necessary to determine the Election. The Sacred College is commonly composed of three parties; the Pious, the Politic, and the Indifferent. The first contend obstinately for electing him whom they believe to be the most deserving; the second are determined by their interests, or the influence

influence of the crowned heads; while the third are blown about by every wind; which gave rise to the true saying, *That he who goes Pope into the Conclave, always comes out a Cardinal.*

Ganganelli was unconnected with any party, and almost single, when he was asked by some of the Cardinals if he chose to be Pope: *As you are too few to nominate me,* answered he, *and too many to know my secret, you shall know nothing.*

The Emperor was at this time in Rome, and visited the Conclave, but did not speak a word in favour of Ganganelli, nor even suspect that he would be elected. Astonished only at seeing him in a black habit, he took him for a Friar; when Ganganelli in a low voice said, *He is a Religious of the Order of Saint Francis, and wears the livery of poverty.*

Pasquinades, which have always been in use at Rome, and more particularly during



during the sittings of the Conclave, were at this time multiplied on all sides. As they generally declare the prevailing opinions, it may not be amiss to take notice of some which characterised Ganganelli. One in Latin applied to him these words of the 118th Psalm, *Super docentes me intellexi*; "I know more than my instructors." Another in Italian represented him as having teeth to bite, and a good nose to smell :

*A denti per morficare,*

*E buon nazo per sentire.*

These were the more flattering, as satires at that time spare nobody. Some of the Cardinals were represented as not being able to speak, --- *Ab nescio loqui*; and others as only having a human form — *Animal quasi habens faciem hominis*, &c. &c. &c.

The Conclave lasted three months and some days, and became tumultu-

ous.



ous from the difficulties which occurred in nominating a Pontiff. The Jesuits had a number of Cardinals who were attached to them, and dreaded the suppression of their order; while their opinions were counterbalanced by others, who found means to unite the cause of politics with religion, to support the rights of the Holy See, and yield at the same time to the desires of the Sovereign Princes.

The Cardinals attached to the House of Bourbon knew, that tho' Ganganelli had no hatred against the Jesuits, he never cultivated their friendship; that while Professor of Theology, he had frequently combated their opinions, and explained himself openly upon the necessity of coming to an agreement with the Kings; and that he thought, whenever any religious Order became obnoxious to the Catholic Powers, it ought to be suppressed.

Besides

Besides this, there was a Friar with whom he had frequently corresponded upon the transactions of Clement XIII. who thought that it was for the interest of the Church to acquaint the French Minister with this correspondence. His manner of thinking, therefore, being found totally different from the late system, and it appearing extremely probable that he would second the views of the House of Bourbon, Louis XV. gave positive orders to Cardinal de Bernis to support the election of Ganganelli. De Bernis, a man of great abilities, having drawn off Cardinal Rezzonico and his party to the side of France and Spain, gained an important victory, inasmuch as it decided the election in favour of Ganganelli, and seated in the Chair of St. Peter the man that was most worthy to fill it. Thus of old did the eloquence of Aaron frequently serve to accomplish the designs of God.

We

We may judge from this simple narrative of facts, whether there could be any foundation for the contemptible satires which said that Clement XIV. obtained the Triple Crown on condition that he would suppress the Order of Jesuits. Ganganelli despised honours too much, and his conscience was too delicate, to submit to such conditions. But the fate of the greatest men is to have two characters : while they are extolled by some, they are defamed by others.

On the 19th May, 1769, the Sacred College, finding that Ganganelli would be agreeable to the Kings, and knowing him to be both learned and virtuous, proclaimed him Sovereign Pontiff. He was then seen to appear like a rainbow in the Heavens, issuing from a thick cloud to announce the return of fine weather. He was desirous to have taken the name of Sixtus VI. but in  
gratitude

gratitude to Clement XIII. who had made him Cardinal, he took the name of Clement, according to an old established custom.

He was so little dazzled with his promotion, that next morning he could scarcely be awaked; for, most unlike an ambitious man, he had never slept more sound. When the ceremony of the adoration was over, he was asked, if he was tired? and replied in his usual humble, natural manner, *That he had never seen that ceremony more at his ease; particularly as he recollected how he had been squeezed on a similar occasion, when he was only a simple Friar.*

It is incredible how the people rejoiced when they were informed of his being chosen. Nothing but shouts of joy were heard; and, as a Venetian lady wrote to her friends, “the World was transported with joy, as if the Golden Age was to return.” But alas! it was only the

dawn of a fine day, which was to end with the morning.

He was desired to send a Courier to inform his sisters of his promotion; but he was content to write by the post, saying, they were not used to receive ambassadors.

No Pope was ever elected in more tempestuous times. Portugal was about to choose a Patriarch, and lay aside all communication with the Pope; and the Kings of France, Spain, and Naples, threatened to take some steps fatal to the Court of Rome. Venice proposed to reform their Religious Communities without paying any attention to the Holy See. Poland wanted to diminish the privileges of the Nuncio, and to check the papal power; while the Romans themselves murmured at seeing their possessions fall into the hands of strangers. And to complete all these misfortunes, a madness



ness was spreading far and wide, which attacked Kings and Pontiffs, and even God himself, by ranking Christianity in the same class with superstitious chimeras. What a prospect for the Head of the Church !

Clement XIV. began his reign by addressing vows to Heaven for the necessities of the Church and State ; and, in the next place, by writing to the different Monarchs, to shew his pacific disposition. He appointed Cardinal Palavicini to be his Secretary of State, as a Minister agreeable to the Kings ; but with an intention to govern by himself, and to preserve his intentions in inviolable secrecy from the whole world.

The affair of the Jesuits was urged daily by the different Princes and their Ambassadors ; but such was the moderate spirit of Ganganelli, whose love of justice made him weigh every grievance



grievance with the minutest attention before he would decide, that four years were employed in the examination.

Like an indulgent parent, he took the first steps to lead to an accommodation with Portugal, and succeeded in re-establishing the ancient friendship which had subsisted between the two Courts.

He was crowned in St. Peter's the 4th of June 1769, amidst the loudest acclamations; and on the 26th of November following, he took possession of Saint John de Lateran, with all the magnificence which usually accompanies that pompous ceremony.

His love of peace, and his sollicitude to accommodate matters with the offended Kings, made him omit some ceremonies at a time when they were expected with their usual eclat; and as this was the effect of his own authority, without any previous consultation, the

Cardinals concluded, that he was not to be led, nor even his intentions to be divined.

Though he was happy in his native simplicity of manners, Ganganelli knew when to assume the manners of a Sovereign Pontiff, and how to display the august character with the greatest dignity; as was seen when the Duke of Gloucester visited Rome. Indeed, strangers of every country and every rank met with the most engaging reception, and were all anxious to see a disciple of Saint Francis who had been preferred to the Roman Princes, and the sons of Kings, in an age most unfavourable to his profession.

That he might neither be betrayed, nor have his intentions discovered, he treated with the Kings himself; and by his attention to the wants of the people, guarded against the evils by which the Ecclesiastical State had been distressed

distressed in the time of his predecessor, from the villany of monopolizers, who had sent the provisions to Venice which should have supplied the Romans.

The Cardinals murmured at his want of confidence ; but he said, *That a Sovereign who had a number of confidants, was infallibly governed, and often betrayed ;—I sleep sound when my secret is my own.*

His manner of living was as abstemious when he was Pope, as it had been while he was Friar at the Convent of the Holy Apostles. When he was told that the Papal Dignity required a more sumptuous table, he answered, *That neither St. Peter nor St. Francis had taught him to dine splendidly*; and when the head-cook of the Kitchen came to beg that he might be continued ; he said to him, *You shall not lose your appointment, but I*  

b 2

*will*

xxviii ANECDOTES OF GANGANELLI,  
*will not lose my health to keep your  
hand in.*

He was reproached with being too indulgent in granting Briefs of Secularization ; but he considered a discontented Monk as a perpetual disgrace to the community. The greatest satisfaction he derived from his being appointed Cardinal, was the power of sometimes assisting his neighbour ; and he never went abroad without giving some instances of his liberality, which were always accompanied with the most pleasing language.

A proof of his having the resolution, if he had not the severity of Sixtus Quintus, was his arresting the Marquis of ——— for having given the Count of ——— a box on the ear in public, and sending him instantly to the Castle of St. Angelo, to remain there for seven years. Yet no man shewed greater sensibility than he did when  
he

he was informed of a criminal being sentenced to die.

He discouraged every kind of flattery, and no man was easier with his friends. He would dispute with the learned, talk politics with the politician, converse with foreigners, and be sociable with his brethren of St. Francis. One evening he said, *I have been a Prince and a Pope all day. That I may not be quite suffocated, I must be Father Ganganelli again. — Come, let us chat as we used to do.*

To the little artifices practised by narrow minds to obtain their ends, he was a stranger. Though peculiarly calculated for a Court, which is accused of being the very vortex of intrigue and chicane, he never deceived the Politicians, but by remaining silent; for when he spoke, he uttered the truth. He was too upright a man to act by sinister means, and had, in-



deed, too great a genius to stand in need of them.

No one knew better when to seize the proper moment, when he was neither slow nor precipitate. "The hour is not come," he would say, when he was solicited to hasten some operation. He wrote to Cardinal Stoppani, "I mistrust my vivacity, and therefore I shall not answer till the end of a week, concerning what your Eminency requires of me. Our imagination is often our greatest enemy; I am striving to weary mine before I act. Business, like fruit, hath its time of maturity, and we should never think of dispatching it, when it is only half ripe."

His manner of reading resembled his other operations; he abstained from books, if he found himself disposed to reflect; and as Sovereigns are

led

led by circumstances, from whence we may conclude that all men are born dependent, he often kept vigils great part of the night, and slept in the day-time. " Their Rule, he used to " say, is the compass of Monks and " Friars ; but the wants of their people is the clock of sovereigns : be it " what hour it may, if they want us, " we must attend them." *La bussola di frati è la lora regola, ma il bisogno del popolo è l'orologio dei sovrani.*

This maxim, when he was Pope, often tore him from his books. He then read only to edify, or to relax from business. He was of opinion, that all the books in the world might be reduced to fix thousand volumes in folio, and that those of the present age were nothing but paintings, which daubers had found the art of cleaning, in order to present them in the properest light to public view.

It is to be lamented that he produced nothing in the literary way, though some have ascribed to him part of the Works of Benedict XIV. We should have found in his writings the phlegm of the Germans, blended with the vivacity of the Italians: but he was so thoroughly persuaded that there were too many Writers, that he was always fearful of increasing the number. He said one day, smiling, “Who  
 “ knows whether Brother Francis  
 “ may not one day take it into his  
 “ head to write? I should not be in  
 “ the least astonished to see some  
 “ Work in his manner; but surely it  
 “ will not be an history of my ra-  
 “ gouts, or the book must be very  
 “ concise!”

When any one mentioned to him the fashionable productions that appeared against Christianity, he would say, “ The more there are, the more  
 “ the

“ the world will be convinced of the  
 “ necessity of it.” He observed,  
 “ That all the Writers who opposed  
 “ Christianity, knew only how to dig  
 “ a ditch, and that was all they could  
 “ supply its place with.” He said,  
 “ That Mr. Voltaire, whose poetry he  
 “ admired, attacked Religion so often,  
 “ only because it was troublesome to  
 “ him ; and that J. J. Rousseau was a  
 “ painter, who always forgot the  
 “ heads, and who excelled only in the  
 “ drapery.”

He explained himself one day upon  
 a Work called *The System of Nature*,  
 and added, “ What hurts me is, that  
 “ the more it is founded upon false  
 “ principles, the more, in an age like  
 “ ours, it will gain reputation and  
 “ readers ; and it will receive an ad-  
 “ ditional value by its being seriously  
 “ refuted.” He afterwards observed,  
 that “ the Author of this bad Book is

“ a madman, who imagines, that by  
 “ changing the master of the house,  
 “ he can dispose of it just as he pleases,  
 “ without reflecting, that no creatures  
 “ can breathe but by existing in God :  
 “ *in ipso vivimus, movemur & sumus.*  
 “ But every age is distinguished by a  
 “ new-fangled mode of thinking.  
 “ After the times of superstition, are  
 “ come the days of infidelity ; and  
 “ the man who formerly adored a  
 “ multitude of gods, now affects not  
 “ to acknowledge any one. Virtue,  
 “ vice, immortality, annihilation, all  
 “ appear to him synonymous terms,  
 “ provided some silly Pamphlet serves  
 “ him as a rampart against Heaven ;  
 “ and it is in the very bosom of Reli-  
 “ gion that these scandalous opinions  
 “ originate and multiply. Whilst Re-  
 “ ligion was persecuted by the Pagans,  
 “ a Pope had at least the glory and  
 “ the good fortune to defend it at the  
 “ price



“ price of his blood ; but now that  
“ he cannot fly to martyrdom, he is  
“ unfortunately compelled to be the  
“ sorrowful witness of error and im-  
“ piety.”

These excellent reflections he made in the presence of a Commander of Malta, from whom the Author had them, and who assured him, that the Pope was ever ready to sacrifice himself for the good of Religion, and the interests of the Church, considering his life as no object when these were called in question.

It was solely for the glory of the Church that he from time to time created several Cardinals, without paying any attention to their private connections.

Their institution, which commences in the ninth century, had no other object than the benefit and honour of Religion. They constitute the Council of the Sovereign Pontiffs, when

they have occasion for advice; and there were at all times amongst them persons of eminence, whose zeal, added to their knowledge, proved of infinite use to the Church and State. Some carried their courage and their faith to the extremities of the world; others, with the approbation of Princes, governed with wisdom the most flourishing Empires. The latest posterity will remember with admiration, the Amboises, Ximenes, Richelieus, and Fleurys, and consider them as the bulwarks of those kingdoms where they acted as Ministers.

If Clement XIV. did not make any complete promotion of Cardinals during his Pontificate, it is to be supposed that he was restrained by other Powers, or that he was puzzled to select proper subjects. He might probably rather choose to come to no determination, than to displease any of his  
old

old friends, who flattered themselves with the hopes of obtaining the Purple, and nevertheless might not be worthy of it. The good qualities necessary in friendships are not sufficient for a Cardinal. It is a dignity that has too much influence upon the Church, to be bestowed at random.

To judge properly of the genius of Clement, we should view him with some friends, and particularly the Cardinal de Bernis, (whose different periods of life seem to have been distinguished by the most flattering epochas, and the most delicate works of genius) conferring upon the subjects of the times, and the means of reconciling the interests of Religion with those of the Princes. When the greatest lights had been thrown by these his Counsellors upon the subject in debate, Ganganelli, as the *primum mobile* of their deliberations, decided with manly resolution. The slightest

est error would have been of the most dangerous consequence. The chief point in question was to weigh the rights of the Sovereign Pontiff, the motives upon which he acted, and to keep within the bounds that support the equilibrium between the Holy Father and the other Potentates.

The more arduous and difficult are the functions of a Pope, the more he stands in need of repose to enable him to sustain his labours. Castlegandolfo, built by the Chevalier Bernini, four leagues from Rome, near the Lake Albano, which commands the most agreeable prospects, is the usual summer residence of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

Clement failed not to repair thither in the months of May and October, the most proper seasons in Italy to enjoy the pleasures of the country ; and it was here, to be intimately acquainted  
ed

ed with him, we should view him anatomizing an insect, analyzing a flower, pursuing the phænomena of nature, by degrees rising up to her Author, and at length taking a general view of Earth and Heaven: or, retiring within himself by private meditation; or, at other times, familiarly conversing with his friends and intimates.

His imagination was raised at the sight of those beauties that present themselves in the neighbourhood of Rome to the recollection of the antient Romans, who had so boldly trampled upon the soil: he recalled to his memory the most sublime and ingenious passages of the ancient Poets upon the occasion. There are few Italians of any education, who are unacquainted with the Works of Ariosto, Dante, Tasso, Petrarch, and Metastasio; even the women amuse them-



1 ANECDOTES OF GANGANELLI,

themselves with the perusal of these Poets, and can quote them occasionally.

His Philosophy served his imagination as an excellent second ; it recalled to his memory the different situations of his life ; at one time in a state of obscure tranquillity, then forcibly agitated in the glare of dignity : like a pilot, who, after a calm serene morning, in the evening finds himself in a violent hurricane, accompanied with thunder, hail, and rain.

Sometimes, weary of meditation, he would retire with an old Convent Friend, Brother Francis, into some private arbour where they could not be seen. There some Cloyster anecdotes amused them, and they seemed in a perfect state of equality. One day, Clement pointing to him, repeated these words : “ He has kept his habit, “ and is happier than I am, who wear “ the Tiara. It was decreed I should “ be

“ be a Pope, and I very much fear (here  
 “ he paused)--however, we must sub-  
 “ mit to the will of God.”

He was once entertaining himself in this manner, when some Ambassadors were announced to him. They found him as serene and composed as if nothing agitated his mind; but he could not help laughing in his sleeve at the perplexities he excited in the curious.

While he was at Castlegandolfo, on giving a splendid repast to some Grantees of Spain, he laid aside his Sovereign authority, and joined them in a friendly manner when seated at table, without suffering them to rise to salute him.

The Public imagined he had lost sight of the grand affair of the Jesuits, whilst, according to the custom of the Court of Rome, he only sought to gain time. He sometimes searched the archives of the *Propaganda*, to consult

consult the Memoirs of Cardinal de Tournon, of M. Maigrot, of La Beaumé, and of the Jesuit Missionaries. At other times he had read to him the accusations of the Society, and their vindications. Every important publication, *pro* or *con*, respecting the Jesuits, he attentively examined; whilst equally distrusting the eulogiums and the sarcasms passed upon them, he was biased neither by their Panegyrists nor their Satirists. No man was ever more impartial. Equally abstracting himself from his own inclinations as well as all prejudices, he judged in the same manner upon the occasion, as posterity necessarily must.

“ Let me (said he to the Sovereigns who pressed him to determine) have leisure to examine the important business upon which I am to pronounce. I am the common Father of the Faithful, particularly  
 “ of

“ of the Religious ; and I cannot  
“ destroy a celebrated Order, with-  
“ out having sufficient reasons to justi-  
“ fy me in the eyes of all ages, and,  
“ above all, before God.”

The people, ever idolizing him, ceased not to bless his reign ; and their perseverance in doing so constitutes his greatest eulogium. It is well known that the Romans easily change from enthusiasm to hatred ; that they have often calumniated those Pontiffs whom they have flattered the most ; and that a Pope, to please them, should not reign above three years. Unhappy, on account of their laziness, they constantly hope, that a change of masters must be attended with an increase of happiness ; just as sick men are apt to fancy that they shall be much easier when they are placed in another posture.

The glory of Clement would not have been complete, if he had not contributed to the embellishment of Rome, a city so susceptible of ornaments, and so fertile in riches proper to decorate it. Willing, therefore, to pursue the paths of Sixtus V. Paul V. and Benedict XIV. he composed a Museum, comprizing every thing that could gratify the curiosity of Antiquaries and Travellers ; that is to say, of the scarcest curiosities that have been transmitted by the Ancients.

It might be said, on this occasion, that Rome, desirous of honouring his Pontificate, was eager to display the master-pieces of art which lay concealed within her bowels. Scarce a year passed without vases, urns, statues of exquisite workmanship being dug up, to enrich the superb collection begun under Lambertini. Here, with the glance of an eye, we may see the triumph  
of



of the Christian Religion, by the fragments that were used in the Pagan sacrifices, and the ruins of all those prophane divinities, whose statues are no longer held in estimation, but in proportion to the masterly manner with which they are executed.

When Clement could relax from the variety of business in which he was engaged, he visited these monuments with Foreigners of distinction, and celebrated Artists, rather as a Sovereign who considers it as a duty to embellish his capital, than as an *amateur* who gratifies his taste. This he said to the Chevalier Chatelus, a worthy descendant of the immortal d'Aguesseau, as well on account of his wit as his extensive knowledge. After conversing with him upon different subjects, he added, that being  
 “ born in a Village, and brought up in  
 “ a Cloyster, where the love of the  
 “ arts

“ arts was not inspired, he could not  
 “ acquire the necessary judgment to  
 “ determine as a Connoisseur upon  
 “ the monuments he had collected; but  
 “ that, as a Sovereign, he thought  
 “ himself obliged to display the finest  
 “ models to the eyes of Artists and  
 “ the Curious, that they might know  
 “ and imitate them.”

If he did not always reward the  
 Learned, as they might think they had  
 a right to expect from so enlightened  
 a Pope, circumstances should be ad-  
 verted to. The multiplicity of busi-  
 ness in which he was engaged, joined  
 to the shortness of his reign, did not  
 afford him leisure to engage in those  
 pursuits which would have given him  
 the greatest pleasure. Moreover, a  
 Pope cannot always act agreeably to  
 his own inclinations. There are in-  
 cidents that tie up his hands. Never-  
 theless, he was always found attentive

to bestow Bishoprics upon those only whom he knew to be men of learning; and to this reason may be ascribed his so frequently promoting Priests of his own Order.

A Pope is generally very circumspect in the nomination of a Bishop. He knows that the proper government of a diocese requires judgment and abilities; for which reason the Italian Bishops are usually as humble as they are learned, and as charitable as they are zealous. They are constant residents, and live in friendship and cordiality with their Curates; for they must not be confounded with those *Monsignori* known in Rome under the titles of *Prelati*, and who frequently, not being even in Orders, fill such posts as Laymen might occupy, and serve the Pope in his various functions.

Clement was not less attentive in the nomination of his Nuncios: he  
was

was desirous that his Ambassadors should do him honour, as well by their manners as by their learning, and particularly by their love of peace. And if he appointed M. Doria his Nuncio to the Court of France, notwithstanding his youth, it was because he was convinced that his extraordinary virtues had outstripped his years, and that his merit already corresponded with the celebrity of his name. It was not till after the consequence this Prelate had gained in Spain (where he was the bearer of the consecrated child-bed linen), that Clement named him Nuncio in France. He sent him there as an Angel of Peace, capable of maintaining the harmony between the Father and the eldest Son of the Church.

Religion has often suffered by an indiscreet zeal; and in order to prevent it for the future, as far as possible, Clement, whose prudence ever dictated all his

his steps and resolves, observed the Evangelical toleration which the Divine Legislator made use of towards the Saducees and the Samaritans. He used to say, “ We too often lay aside  
“ Charity to maintain Faith ; with-  
“ out reflecting, that if it is not al-  
“ lowed to tolerate error, it is for-  
“ bidden to hate and persecute those  
“ who have unfortunately embraced  
“ it.”

He watched attentively over the Pontifical treasures. Besides paying all the expences of the Conclave when he was chosen, some debts of the Apostolical Chamber, and all those of his predecessor; he established some manufactures, and amply provided for the expences of the state, while he gave pensions to decayed gentlemen and new converts.

While Ganganelli found the treasures of the state sufficient to support the public expences, and to do



many acts of generosity, he was likewise at considerable expence in receiving the Princess Dowager of Saxe, and the Brothers of the King of England, whom he entertained most royally.

But what redounds more to his credit, and is very singular in the history of a Pope, he never once thought of raising his own family at the public charge, but, on the contrary, seemed totally to neglect them ; although it had been the practice of his predecessors to raise their Nephews to the highest honours.

The history of Nepotism, which has been the rock upon which almost all the Popes have split, teaches us, that the more devout they were, the more they enriched their Nephews, and raised them to the greatest honours.

No man ever set a more striking example of disinterestedness. He  
even

even declined to accept of a fine snuff-box ; and pulling out his old one from his sleeve, said it had been his companion in his cell for forty years, and he never would have another.

Rome had long suffered from Quacks, who practised without interruption ; but Clement XIV. soon put a stop to the practice of all who were not regularly approved.

An instance where he shewed unusual vigour, was upon hearing that one *Peter Andrea* had fraudulently exported some grain to Fiumicino, in the Pope's own galleys. Forgetting his natural mildness of temper, and seeing only the danger to which his people might be exposed by such villany, he could not contain himself. *Send him to prison, said he, and let him be immediately tried, that the Public may know, that it is death to me to see the subsistence of my subjects diminished.*

After the strictest examination of every argument which could be produced either against or in favour of the Jesuits, during an enquiry which continued four years, Clement XIV. at last named a commission consisting of five Cardinals, some Prelates, and Advocates, to assist him in the execution of his design; and after the maturest deliberation, signed the Brief on the 21st of July, 1773, which suppressed that famous Order. On the 10th of August following, at nine o'clock in the evening, the Commissioners appointed for the execution of the Brief, accompanied by a Notary, and attended by a guard, went to the different Houses of the Jesuits; and having assembled the Brethren, read to them the Brief of their extinction; at the same time telling them, that the Apostolical Chamber would furnish each of them with a secular habit, pay the travelling

travelling expences of those who chose to quit Rome—that their books and effects should be delivered to them—and that they should have pensions.

As the Jesuits had a great share in the education of youth, the shutting up their schools might have proved of bad consequence, if Clement had not given a new proof of his attention, genius and abilities. Having shut himself up for some days, and sketched out a plan of education worthy of the greatest master; he cast a rapid eye upon some Priests and Friars who by their talents and example were capable of replacing the Jesuit teachers, and immediately instituted them Professors; so that, to the astonishment of Rome, there seemed to be scarce any interval between the departure of the Jesuits and the coming of their Successors; the schools being again opened at the very instant when the Public

c 3

thought

IN ANECDOTES OF GANGANELLI,  
thought they must have remained shut  
up for a long time.

The suppression of the Jesuits hav-  
ing taken place, the Kings and the  
Venetian State immediately accommo-  
dated the disputes which had subsisted  
so long between them and the Court  
of Rome.

Clement naturally possessing a robust  
constitution, and the regularity in  
which he lived, promised a long life;  
but the multiplicity of intricate affairs  
in which he was involved, agitated  
him so much, that his health could  
not fail to be affected. In the  
month of April 1774, he was first  
observed to decline, and soon after  
was tormented with cruel pains in his  
bowels, with which he languished  
for five months, without the Physi-  
cians being able to discover the cause  
of his disorder, or to afford him the  
least relief. Upon his death, which hap-  
pened



pened on the 22d of September, his body turned instantly black, and appeared in a state of putrefaction, which induced the people present to impute his death to the effect of poison; and it was very generally reported that he had fallen a sacrifice to the resentment of the Jesuits.

Thus died Francis-Laurence Ganganelli, aged 69 years, 10 months, and 22 days, after having arrived at the highest dignity in the most turbulent times, without having been for one single instant dazzled by his elevation, or dismayed by the troubles he had to encounter, His life was a model for future Popes; and his death a lesson to all good Christians.

He was of an ordinary stature, had a large fore head, black and very thick eye-brows, lively eyes, and a longish face.

the regiment of the Jesuits.

[illegible]

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# P R E F A C E

By M. C A R A C C I O L I.

**T**H E astonishing sale of these Letters sufficiently proclaims their merit. Their authenticity cannot be doubted, if we would judge of them merely from their striking conformity with the knowledge, genius, and conduct of Clement XIV.

Beside the honourable testimonies which Foreigners and the Learned in every part of Europe rendered to Ganganelli before he was advanced to the Papal Chair; as to a person of the greatest affability and impartiality, with the most enlightened understanding, and most pacific turn of mind; the suppression of the Bull *In Cœna Domini*, and the perfect harmony which he re-established between the Court of Rome and the offended Kings, must shew the world that this immortal Pontiff was not led by opinions or prejudices, but that he really thought too much respect could not be paid to Sovereigns who had been on all occasions the protectors of the Holy See, and that the Popes can never be  
more

more powerful than when supported by the House of Bourbon.

The Letters of Clement XIV. are fully authenticated by his conduct and by his sentiments. They display the same religious principles which he always taught in public; the same maxims which he observed in his life; and the same understanding which made him keep at a distance whatever favoured either of fanaticism or superstition.

But what more evidently proves that these Letters are not counterfeit;—I had copied a number of them of the year 1758 at Florence, from the originals which were communicated to me by the Prelate Cerati and the Abbé Lami, and was desirous to publish them in the year 1762, when I received the following answer from P. Ganganelli (then Cardinal), whose consent I wished to obtain; an answer which at present lies before me, and which I can shew to any one who is desirous of seeing it.

S I R,

*THE Letters which have been communicated to you at Florence were written in haste, and by no means deserve the honour you are inclined to confer on them by a publication; I most earnestly beg of you, therefore, not to give them to the Public. What I have written can have no other merit than candour*

*dour and truth. I am not the less obliged to you, and shall always acknowledge the affection you have shewn for me. — I shall seek every opportunity of testifying my gratitude, and proving to you with what esteem I declare myself*

*Your sincere humble Servant,*

F. LAUR. CARD. GANGANELLI.

ROME, 19th Sept. 1762.

It is evident, then, that from the year 1762, I had genuine Letters of P. Ganganelli; and it is not less evident, that those which have come to my hands in the course of the last year, have such a resemblance to these, that they cannot be mistaken. The Author of the *Journal des Sciences & des Beaux-Arts* says, with reason, “That if they will only acknowledge  
“ three of the Letters to be those of  
“ Clement XIV. it is necessary that  
“ they should all be so; for the same soul  
“ and the same genius hath dictated the  
“ whole.” Connoisseurs are not to be deceived, and with only a little taste and practice, copies are to be distinguished from originals as easily in Letters as in Painting. The soul of Clement XIV. is seen over the whole, and That cannot be copied. Besides, what is there extraordinary in all this?—That Ganganelli, who having attained to be a Cardinal, and afterwards to be Pope, by his merit;—who

was



was declared in a full Consistory, by the famous Father Berti, in a public Act, to be a person of whom Rome should be vain;—who was boasted of as a most eloquent Panegyrist by a number of towns in Italy;—marked out by the great Lambertini (Benedict XIV.) as a subject of the highest hopes; in short, cited as a man of rare accomplishments by every Writer in Italy:—what is there, I say, extraordinary in his having wrote ingenious and learned Letters? If the spirit of Party had not wished to pass Ganganelli upon the world for a man of middling parts, this matter would never have been disputed.

If Clement XIV. had left a numerous family; if a spirit of party had been discernible in these Letters; or if the mediocrity of the Work had required a respectable name to impose upon the Public; passion or interest might be suspected: but in the present case, we are obliged to acknowledge the truth.

It is with great injustice that the Italians are accused of knowing nothing but superstitious devotion. The most excellent book of enlightened piety which we have, was wrote by Muratori; and nobody is ignorant of Benedict XIV. having proved both by his discourses and writings, the sovereign contempt in which he held every thing which was only trifling

attention to church ceremonies; and that the Sacred College had always men of the brightest parts.

It is no less certain that among the Religious in Cloisters, especially in Italy, many individuals may be found who have knowledge, principles, and extensive views, yet want opportunities of displaying their talents to become great men. For example, place P. Gerdil, a religious Barnabite, and Preceptor to the Prince of Piedmont, in a conspicuous light, and you will unquestionably see genius and learning shine forth, with a piety totally free from Pharisaical zeal and party-spirit. To dispute the ability of the Italians to write sensible, ingenious Letters, is to betray an ignorance of their character.

The objection made to this Work, "that there are people at Rome who know nothing of them," does not deserve to be refuted. We do not call in friends and neighbours as witnesses when we sit down to write; and it happens daily, that even those with whom we live do not know our correspondents.

"It would be more honest, say they, to mention the source from whence these Letters were obtained." But as this is a matter of confidence, and the people from whom we received them are unwilling to appear, we cannot betray their secret. It requires no great exertion of

mind to divine the motives of their discretion; they will one day declare them, and it will be seen how well they were founded.

The inaccuracy of the dates, which are corrected in this Edition, had no other origin but in the great hurry of the Printers:—the greater these faults, the less ought they to be ascribed to the Editor.

The great number of Italian words found in the first Edition, having displeased many people of taste by their breaking the discourse, or introducing a medley which was not in the original Letters, I have retrenched almost all the citations, or rather have translated them into the text.

I have retouched the Letters to Louis XV. Madame Louisa, the Duke of Parma, &c. when it will be seen (as far as the style of the Roman Chancery could admit of it) that they truly resemble the other Letters. I have likewise reviewed the Italian, and have found some faults in the translation which will not appear now, as the thoughts are given in their proper sense. It appeared to me, that as all the three warrants addressed to Monsignor Girault, his Holiness's Nuncio, on the subject of Madame Louisa's profession and taking the habit, expressed the same thing, one was sufficient.

If the *Supplement*, which the Public have impatiently expected, has not appeared, it is because the Works of Ganganelli are not fabricated in France, as has been reported; and that authentic Pieces are still wanting to complete it. Those which I have already, with some that are promised, will enable me to give another Volume, quite distinct from, but not less interesting than, the Letters; where some curious anecdotes and pieces of singular eloquence will be found. M. L' Abbé Fabri, Nephew of Clement XIV. will undertake to publish the Theological Treatises composed by his Uncle, which are in the highest esteem.—In his Letter to me from Rome, of the 6th February last, he says; *Li quali di qui a non molto i stesso manderò alla luce.*

Nothing more remains to be said, than that Posthumous Works are almost always suspected; and though a decree of Parliament was obtained formerly by Mons. Bossuet, Bishop of Troyes, affirming to the Public, that certain productions which he published under the name of his Uncle, the Bishop of Meaux, were truly the works of that great Prelate; yet there are many people who will not believe it. It is to be observed, however, that some prejudice, party spirit, or personal interest, generally leads people to contradict and deny what they are ignorant of.

These

These Letters will be admired in spite of every objection; and the more they are known, the more honour will they reflect on Ganganelli, on the Age, and on his Country; because the memory of the Righteous ought to be eternal, and because he has nothing to dread from prepossession or prejudice.

The Counterfeits, which multiply on all hands, and swarm with errors, oblige me to repeat here again, that the only exact and correct Edition is that which is to be had at Lottin's, jun. Bookseller at Paris, signed with his name.

N. B. The Counterfeits we speak of, in printing the *Life of Clement XIV.* have had the awkwardness to make their impression from the first Edition, which is exceedingly imperfect when compared with the last; and this Life, which they have joined to the two Volumes of Letters, they have distributed, and declared every where to be an Edition augmented more than one-third.



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# LETTERS, &c.

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## LETTER I.

TO M. DE CABANE, KNIGHT OF MALTHA.

SIR,

**T**HE solitude which you have formed to yourself in your own breast makes it unnecessary to seek another. Cloisters are only to be preferred in proportion as the mind becomes more recollected there, for the merits of a Monastery are not in the walls.

The Convent of La Trappe which we have in Italy, to which you purpose retiring, is not less orderly than the one of the same Order in France; but wherefore quit the world while you can improve it? It will remain for ever wicked, if abandoned by all the good.

Besides, is not the Order of Maltha, in which you live, a religious Order, and capable of purifying you, if you discharge your duty in it?

We ought to deliberate well before we take upon us a new load of obligations. The Gospel is the best guide for a Christian; and to admit of our being buried in solitude, the vocation ought to be well tried.

There is something extraordinary in whatever takes us out of the common road of life, and in embracing the life of a Monk we ought to dread some illusion. I truly honour the Monks who follow the institutions of the Chartreuse and La Trappe, but only a few of these Orders are wanted. Besides the difficulty of finding a great number of religious, truly fervent, they ought to be apprehensive of injuring the state, by rendering themselves useless members of society. We are not born Monks, we are born Citizens. The world requires people to contribute to its harmony, to make empires flourish by their talents, labour, and morals.

These

These profound solitudes, which shew no exterior signs of life, are only graves. St. Anthony, who lived long in the desert, did not make a vow to remain always there. He quitted his retreat, and came into the middle of Alexandria to combat Arianism, and disperse the Arians; because he was convinced that the state and the cause of religion were to be served by actions more than by prayers. When he had accomplished the purpose of his mission, he returned to his Hermitage, in sorrow for having preserved the little blood which old age had still left in his veins, and that he had not suffered martyrdom.

When at La Trappe, it is true, you will pray to God day and night; but cannot you direct your thoughts continually to him, though in the middle of the world? It is not in words that the merit of prayer consists; our sovereign Lawgiver tells us himself, that it is not the multitude of words which can obtain for us the favour of Heaven.

Many respectable Writers have not hesitated to impute the remissness in Monasteries

nafteries to a tiresome repetition of forms of devotion. They thought, with reason, that the attention could not be preserved during too long prayers, and that bodily labour is of more advantage than continual psalm-singing.

The world would not have exclaimed so much against the Monks, if they had been seen usefully employed. The memory of those who cultivated wilds, and enriched cities with skilful productions, or ascertained historical facts or the dates of events, are still respected.

The Benedictines of the learned Congregation of St. Maur in France, which we vulgarly call Maurini, have acquired lasting honour by the publication of a number of works both curious and useful. The celebrated P. Montfaucon, who is one of their greatest ornaments, filled all Italy with the fame of his learning, when he dedicated his application entirely to the study of antiquity.

St. Bernard, the reformer of so many Monasteries which follow his rules, rendered himself very useful both to religion  
and

and his country ; not when he preached up the Crusades, which could only be justified by the intention ; but when he gave useful advice both to Popes and Kings, and composed his immortal works. He had not become a Father of the Church, if he had done nothing but pray.

Father Mabillon, in his famous treatise on Monastic Studies, appears to me to have fully triumphed over the Abbé de Rancé, who asserts that Monks should only study contemplation and psalmody. The destiny of man is to labour. *There is but one step from a speculative to an idle life*, said Cardinal Paleotti, and nothing is more easy than to make that step.

You will do more good by relieving the poor, and comforting them by your discourse, than by burying yourself in a desert. John the Baptist, who was the greatest of men, quitted the desert to declare the kingdom of God was approaching, and to baptise on the banks of the river Jordan.

Do not imagine, my dear Sir, that in speaking of a useful life, I want to make an apology for the religious Mendicants, at



the expence of the Anchorets. Every Order has its rules ; and the maxim here should be, *that he who doth not eat flesh, should not despise him who doth eat :* but I own I esteem the Brother Minors the more, because they join the active life of Martha to the contemplative life of Mary ; and I believe, whatever certain enthusiasts may say, the active life is much the more meritorious.

St. Benedict was sensible that we ought to be useful to our country, and in consequence instituted a seminary for Gentlemen at Mont-Cassino. He knew what sort of laws the love of our neighbour inspires.

If, however, in spite of all I have said, you still feel a secret inspiration which calls you to the monastic life, you will do what you think proper ; for I should be afraid to oppose the will of God, who leads his servants as he pleaseth, and often by uncommon means.

I wish I could be with you at Tivoli, to meditate in sight of that famous Cascade, which, dividing into a thousand different  
torrents,

torrents, and falling with the greatest impetuosity, presents to the mind a lively picture of this world, and its various agitations.

I wish you agreeable holidays, and am, more than Ciceronian eloquence can express, Sir,

Your most humble, &c.

FR. L. GANGANELLI.

At the CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,  
29 Oct. 1747.

My humble respects to the most worthy Bishop.

## L E T T E R II.

TO THE ABBE FERGHEN.

MONS. ABBE,

**Y**OU cannot do better to divert yourself from your troubles and embarrassment than to visit Italy. Every well-informed man owes an homage to this country, so deservedly boasted of; and it

B 4.

will

will give me inexpressible satisfaction to see you here.

You will instantly see the great bulwarks given us by Nature in the Alps and Appenines, which separate us from France, and have made them give us the name of Tramontanes. They are a majestic range of mountains, which serve as a frame to the magnificent picture within them.

Torrents, rivulets, and rivers, without reckoning the seas, are objects which present the most curious and interesting points of view to foreigners, and especially to painters. Nothing can be more agreeable than the most fertile soil in the finest climate, every where intersected with streams of running water, and every where peopled with villages, or ornamented with superb cities.—Such a country is Italy!

If agriculture was held in equal esteem with architecture;—if the country was not divided into such a number of governments, all of different forms, and almost all weak, and of little extent; misery would not be found by the side of magnificence, and industry without activity; but

but unfortunately we are more engaged in the embellishment of cities, than in the culture of the country; and uncultivated lands every where reproach the idleness of the people.

If you begin your route at Venice, you will see a city very singular from its situation;—it is precisely a great ship resting upon the waters, and which cannot be approached but by boats.

The singularity of its situation is not the only thing that will surprise you.—The inhabitants in masque for four or five months in the year;—the laws of a despotic government, which allow the greatest liberty in their amusements; the rights of a sovereign without authority; the customs of a people who dread even his shadow, and yet enjoy the greatest tranquility; form inconsistencies, which in a very extraordinary manner, must affect foreigners. There is scarcely a Venetian who is not eloquent;—collections have been made of the *bons mots* of their Gondoliers, replete with true Attic salt.

Ferrara displays a vast and beautiful solitude within its walls, almost as silent as the tomb of Ariosto, who was buried there.

Bologna presents another kind of picture : there the Sciences are familiar even to the Fair Sex, who appear with dignity in the schools and academies, and have trophies erected to them daily. A thousand different paintings will gratify your mind and eyes, and the conversation of the inhabitants will delight you.

You will then pass through a multitude of small towns, in the space of more than a hundred leagues, each of which has its Theatre, its Casin (*a rendezvous for the nobility*), a man of learning, or some Poet, who employ themselves according to their fancy, or their leisure.

You will visit Lorretto, made famous by the great concourse of pilgrims from other countries, and the treasures with which the church is magnificently enriched.

You will then descry Rome, which may be seen a thousand years, and always with new pleasure. This city, situated upon seven hills, which the Ancients called the  
Seven



Seven Mistresses of the World, seems to command the universe, and boldly to say to mankind, that she is the Queen, and the Chief.

You will call to mind the ancient Romans, the remembrance of whom can never be effaced, on casting an eye on the famous Tiber, which has been so often mentioned, and which has been so frequently swelled by their own blood, and the blood of their enemies.

You will be in extacy at the sight of St. Peter's, which Connoisseurs say is the wonder of the world, being infinitely superior to the St. Sophia at Constantinople, St. Paul's at London, or even the Temple of Solomon.

It is a pile \* which extends in proportion as you go over it, where every thing is immense, yet appears of an ordinary size. The paintings are exquisite, the monumental sculptures breathe, and you will believe that you see the New Jerusalem.

\* In the original the words are, *c'est un vaisseau*, it is a vessel ; but the uncouthness of the expression made the Translator adopt the word *pile*.

come down from Heaven, which St. John speaks of in the Revelations.

You will find, both in the great, and in the detail, of the Vatican, which was erected on the ruins of false oracles, beauties of every kind that will tire your eyes, while they at the same time charm you. Here Raphael and Michael Angelo, sometimes in a sublime, sometimes in a pathetic manner, have displayed the masterpieces of their genius, by expressing in the most lively language the whole energy of their souls ;—and here the science and genius of all the Writers in the world are deposited, in the multitude of works which compose that rich and immense library.

Churches, palaces, public squares, pyramids, obelisks, pillars, galleries, grand fronts of buildings, theatres, fountains, gardens, views, all, all will declare to you that you are at Rome ; and every thing will attach you to it, as to the city, which of all others has been universally admired. You will not meet with that French elegance which prefers the beautiful to the sublime ;

sublime; but you will be amply recompensed by those striking views that every instant must excite your admiration.

Lastly, in all the figures of painting or sculpture, both ancient and modern, you will see a new creation, and believe it animated. The Academy of Painting, filled with French students, will shew you some who are destined to become great Masters in their profession, and who by coming to study here, do honour to Italy.

You will admire the grandeur and simplicity of the head of the Church, the servant of servants in the order of humility, and the first of men in the eyes of the faithful. The Cardinals who surround him, will represent to you the twenty-four old men who surround the throne of the Lamb, modest in their manners, and instructive by their morals.

But this magnificent prospect will terminate with a view of groupes of Mendicants, whom Rome improperly supports, by bestowing misapplied charity, instead of employing them in useful labours: thus it is that the thorn is seen with the rose,  
and

and vice too frequently by the side of virtue.

But if you wish to see Rome in all her splendour, endeavour to be there by the feast of St. Peter. The illumination of the church begins with a gentle light, which you will easily mistake for the reflection of the setting sun: it then sends forth some pieces of beautiful architecture, and afterwards finishes with waving flames, which make a moving picture, that lasts till day-break. All this is attended with double fireworks, the splendour of which is so bright, that you would think the stars had been plucked from heaven, and burst upon the earth.

I do not mention to you the strange metamorphosis which has placed the Order of St. Francis even in the Capitol, and has produced a new Rome from the ruins of the old; to shew the world that Christianity is truly the work of God, and that he has subdued the most famous conquerors to establish it in the very centre of their possessions. If the modern Romans do not appear warlike, it is because the  
nature

nature of their government does not inspire them with valour; but they have the seed of every virtue, and make as good soldiers as any, when they carry arms under a foreign power. It is certain that they have a great share of genius, a singular aptitude in acquiring the Sciences; and you would imagine they were born Harlequins, so expressive are they in their gestures, even from their infancy.

You will next travel by the famous Apian Way, which by its age is become wretchedly inconvenient, and you will arrive at Naples, the Parthenope of the Ancients, where the ashes of Virgil are deposited, and where you will see a laurel growing, which could not possibly be better placed.

Mount Vesuvius on one side, and the Elysian Fields on the other, will present a most matchless view to you; and after being satisfied with this delightful prospect, you will find yourself surrounded by a multitude of Neapolitans, lively and ingenious, but too much addicted to pleasure and idleness, to become what they other-  
wife



wife might be. Naples would be a delightful place, if it was not for the crouds of people of the lowest rank, who have the appearance of unhappy wretches, or robbers, though often without being either the one or the other.

The churches are magnificently decorated, but their architecture is in a wretched taste, and by no means comparable to the Roman. You will have a singular pleasure in traversing the environs of this town, which is most delightful, from its delicious fruits, charming views, and fine situations. You will penetrate into the famous subterranean city of Herculaneum, which was swallowed up in a former age by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. If the mountain happens to be raging, you will see torrents of fire issue from its bowels, and majestically overspread the country. You will see a collection of whatever has been recovered out of Herculaneum, at Portici; and the environs of Puzzuolo, sung by the Prince of Poets, will inspire you with a true passion for poetry.

You

You must walk with the Æneid in your hand, and compare the cave of the Cummæan Sybil and Acheron with what Virgil has said on those subjects.

You will return by Caserta, which from its decorations, marbles, extent, and aqueducts worthy of ancient Rome, is the finest place in Europe: and you will make a visit to Mount Cassino, where the spirit of St. Benedict has subsisted uninterruptedly above a dozen ages, in spite of the immense riches of that superb monastery.

Florence, from whence the fine arts have issued, and where their most magnificent master-pieces are deposited, will present other objects to your view. There you will admire a city, which, according to the remark of a Portuguese, *should only be shewn on Sundays*, it is so handsome and beautifully decorated. You will every where trace the splendour and elegance of the family of Medici, inscribed in the Annals of Taste as the restorers of the fine arts.

Leghorn is a well inhabited sea-port, of great advantage to Tuscany. Pisa always  
has

has men of learning, on every subject, in its schools. Sienna, remarkable for the purity of its air and language, will interest you in a very singular manner. Parma, placed in the midst of fertile pastures, will show you a theatre which can contain fourteen thousand people, and where every one can hear what is said, though spoken in a whisper. Placentia will appear to you worthy of the name it bears, as its delightful situation must captivate every traveller.

You will not forget Modena, as it is the country of the famous Muratori, and a city celebrated for the name which it has given to its sovereigns.

You will find at Milan the second church in Italy, for size and beauty: more than a thousand marble statues decorate its outside, and it would be a master-piece, if it had a proportionable front. The society of its inhabitants is quite agreeable, ever since it was besieged by the French. They live there as they do in Paris, and every thing, even to the hospitals and church-yards, presents an air of splen-

splendour. The Ambrosian Library must engage the curious; and the Ambrosian ritual no less engage the churchman, who wishes to know the usages of the church, as well as those of antiquity.

The Boromean Isles will next attract your curiosity, from the accounts you must have had of them. Placed in the middle of a delightful lake, they present to your view whatever is magnificent or gay in gardens.

Genoa will prove to you that it is truly superb in its Churches and Palaces. There you will see a port famous for its commerce, and the resort of strangers. You will see a Doge changed almost as often as the superiors of communities, and with scarce any greater authority.

And lastly Turin, the residence of a Court where the Virtues have long inhabited, will charm you with the regularity of its buildings, the beauty of its squares, the straightness of its streets, and the spirit of the people; and there you will agreeably finish your journey.

I have

I have been just making the tour of Italy, most rapidly and at little expence, as you see, to invite you to it in reality; —'tis sufficient to *sketch* paintings to such a master as you.

I make no mention of our morals to you; they are not more corrupt than among other people, let Malice say what it will; they vary only their shades according to the difference of the governments.—The Roman does not resemble the Genoese, nor the Venetian the Neapolitan; but you may say of Italy as of the whole world, that, with some little distinctions, it is here as it is there, *a little good and a little bad.*

I do not attempt to prejudice you in favour of the agreeableness of the Italians; nor of their love of the Arts and Sciences: you will very soon perceive it when you come among them; you of all men, with whom one is delighted to converse, and to whom it will always be a pleasure to say that one is his most humble and most obedient servant.

I have taken the opportunity of a leisure moment to give you some idea of my country;



country; it is only a coarse daubing, which in another hand would have been a beautiful miniature: the subject deserves it, but my pencil is not sufficiently delicate for the execution.

ROME, 12 Nov. 1756.

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### L E T T E R III.

TO ONE OF HIS SISTERS.

**T**HE loss which we have had of so many relations and friends, my dear Sister, declares to us that this life is only borrowed, and that God alone essentially possesseth immortality. What ought to be our comfort is, that we shall be reunited in, if we attach ourselves constantly to, him.

The troubles you speak of ought to be more precious than pleasures, if you have faith. Calvary is in this world the proper place for a Christian, and if he mounts upon Tabor, it is only for an instant.

My health continues with its usual vigour, because I neither live too sparing  
nor

nor too full; sometimes my stomach inclines to be sick, but I tell it that I have not leisure, and it leaves me in quiet. Study absorbs those trifling inconveniences which mankind complain of so frequently. It often happens that we are indisposed, thro' idleness;—many women are sick, without knowing where their complaint lies, because they have nothing to do:—they are tired of being too well, and this satiety is oppressive to people of fashion.

I am very glad to have such good accounts of little Michael. It is a plant which will produce excellent fruit, if carefully cultivated. All depends upon a happy culture; we become every thing or nothing, according to the education we receive.

You regret that we do not see one another; but neither our figures nor our words form our friendship. Provided our affections and thoughts unite us, what signifies our persons being at a great distance? When we love one another in God, we see one another always, for God is over all: he ought to be the  
center

center of all our sentiments, as he is of our souls.

I embrace you most cordially, and am sensible of the value of the Letters you write to me; they recall the memory of a Father I knew but too little, and of a Mother whose life was a constant lesson of virtue. I have never failed to remember them at the altar, nor my dear sister, to whom I am beyond all expression,

A most humble and affectionate, &c.

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## L E T T E R IV.

TO MONSIGNOR BOUGET, PRIVATE CHAMBERLAIN TO HIS HOLINESS.

MY LORD,

I Will not fail to attend your kind invitation, as from one in whom sense, knowledge, and gaiety are happily united. If ever melancholy comes to lay hold of me, I will court your agreeable conversation, of which Benedict XIV. so well knew  
the

the value, and which would have made the same impresson upon Saul, as David's harp. You have a talent for narration so rapid and engaging, that even trifles, from the turn you give them, become matter of solid conversation.

It is a long time since we met at Mount-Trinity. Our Fathers the French Minims deserve to have frequent visits paid to them; it is impossible to be too strongly attached to them, when they love both science and society; and this attachment grows the stronger when you are with them.

When you come to see me, I will shew you my reflections upon a case in which you are interested. There are of all kinds in the Holy Office, some to make us laugh, and others to make us cry; but don't be afraid, I shall not read of the melancholy kind to you. The great art in being well with society, is to serve every one according to their taste.

Gaiety is the true medicine for the studious; the mind and heart should be dilated, when it has been contracted by obstinate

stinate toil. Blossoming is as necessary to the human mind as to trees, to make it recover its verdure, and flourish; but there are people like rose-trees without flowers, who present nothing to your view but bark and prickles. When I meet such, I do not speak a word, but pass by as quick as possibly I can, for fear of being stung.

Gaiety retards old age;—there is always a reviving freshness which accompanies gaiety, instead of the pale wrinkles that are the produce of cares.

Benedict XIV. would not enjoy such good health, if he were not always gay;—he lays down his pen to give vent to some *bons mots*, and resumes it without ever being fatigued.

You are in the right to graft the Italian gaiety upon the French;—it is the way to live to a hundred. That you may do so I sincerely wish, for I am more than I can tell,

My Lord,

Your most humble, &c.



## L E T T E R V.

TO THE MOST REVEREND ABBE OF MONTE  
CASSINO.

MOST REV. SIR,

**Y**OU do me too much honour in consulting me about the dates of your two manuscripts. I believe them to be of the ninth century, by comparing the characters in which they are written, with those of that age; and besides, there is one of our Authors cited who lived at that time, whom few people know, and whose fragments upon the service of the Mass still exist.

It is very generous in you to take the feeble lights of a little Franciscan upon that subject, while you are the Chief of an Order perfectly versed in antiquity, and which has given the most shining and honourable proofs of it, in all parts of the world.

We should be great triflers, were it not for the Benedictines, said Innocent XI. (*Odescalchi*). Beside their being an honour  
to

to the Holy See, and the different churches for whole ages, they have been the fathers and preservers of history. It is with them that Monarchs have found their most august and interesting titles; and science and faith have been uninterruptedly preserved among them, while the thickest clouds of ignorance seemed to overshadow the universe. Though rich and powerful, they have never been seen caballing in kingdoms, nor meddling in intrigues that could be hurtful; on the contrary, they have proved of great assistance to states; and we may say, that notwithstanding all the wealth and honours they have received, public gratitude has still left them unpaid.

If I can answer your intentions, I will most willingly go to that famous retreat which has produced a world of saints and learned men. It would seem, that on treading the ground which these great men inhabited, one partakes of their merits.

It is impossible to add to the profound respect with which I am, &c.

Rome, 5 March, 1743.

## L E T T E R   V I.

TO MR. STUART, A SCOTCHMAN.

I Have followed you in idea, my dearest Sir, both by sea, and upon the Thames. As long as my travels in England are ideal, the populace will not insult me; whereas were I to appear there in person, and in my religious habit, God knows how they might treat me. You must allow that the Popes are good sort of men; for were they to make reprisals, they would insist that every Priest and Monk should have leave to enter London in their habits, or that no Englishman should be received into Rome. And who would suffer most? You in the first place, my dear Sir, who love to visit Italy from time to time; but I protest to you, I should be still more mortified than you, for I am most sincerely attached to the English nation, and have received both pleasure and advantage from the conversation of its inhabitants, who distinguish themselves by their zeal for the culture of arts and

and sciences. I am delighted with your famous poets and your eminent philosophers; in conversing with them I find within me a certain elevation of mind; methinks I grow sublime, and perceive the world beneath me. I sometimes make nocturnal visits to Newton, and at a time when all nature sleeps, I wake to read and admire him. No one like him ever united simplicity with science. His character and genius were superior to pride and ostentation.

I conclude, that at your return you will bring me the little manuscript of Berkeleys, that illustrious *wrong-head*, who imagined there was nothing really *material* in the world, and that all bodies were merely *ideal*. What a view would it exhibit of the human intellect, if the learned, who had hitherto bewildered themselves in the variety of opinions, should at last find themselves of one mind, and that this reason, which has so long remained *incognito*, should come at length to enlighten them with its beams! How

surprised would they be, and at the same time mortified, who had the vanity to imagine they were more than inspired! The world in all ages has been the scene of disputes and errors; and we ought to think ourselves happy amidst so many clouds of contradiction, to have such an unerring light to lead us the right way: I speak of the light of Revelation, which, in spite of all the efforts of infidelity, will never be extinguished. Religion, like the firmament, sometimes may appear obscure to us, but at the same time is not less radiant. The passions and senses are vapours which spring from the womb of our corruption, and intercept the rays of celestial truth; but the man who reflects, without being alarmed or astonished waits the return of a serene and chearful sky. We have seen the fogs raised by Celsus, Porphyry, Spinoza, Collins, Bayle, &c. dispersed, and we may be assured that those of modern *philosophy* will share the same fate. In every age some singular men have appeared, who sometimes by violence, and sometimes by fanaticism, seemed



seemed to threaten the annihilation of Christianity; but they have passed away like those tempests which only serve to show the face of heaven more bright and serene;

It is for want of principles of solid knowledge that some men are dazzled by sophistry; and the most trivial objections appear unanswerable to the ignorant. In religion, every thing is united and combined; and the moment we quit our hold of the least truth, we find nothing but a dark abyss. Such men, instead of concluding, from the view of the wonders they enjoy, that God can undoubtedly confer much greater happiness after this life, judge that the Divinity, all-powerful as he is, can go no further, and that this world is of course the *ne plus ultra* of his wisdom and power.

I should be curious to see a work which could prove demonstratively (and such a one might be easily composed, provided the author were acquainted with natural philosophy and theology), that the world, such as we see it, is a perfect riddle, of which

there can be no solution without religion. It is religion which can account to us for the immensity of that heaven, of which the unbeliever cannot divine the use; for the miseries which we suffer, of which the Philosopher cannot assign the cause; for the growing desires which agitate us, and whose impetuosity we cannot calm.

We have frequently sketched out these great subjects when we have discoursed familiarly together, sometimes at the Villa Borgheze, and sometimes at the Villa Negroni. That time is past, and a part of our lives with it, because every thing passeth away, except the sincere attachment with which I am with all my heart,

My dearest Sir, &c.

ROME, 13 May, 1748.

## LETTER VII.

TO SIGNORA BAZARDI.

**I** Pray you not to consult me about the religious state, which your son proposes to embrace. If I tell you that he cannot do better,

better, you will believe it to be the interested language of a man speaking in favour of his Order: if I answer on the contrary, that he had better not think of it, you will conclude it is the advice of a Friar disgusted with his situation, or convinced that the monastic life is a life of misery. I will not therefore say either Yes, or No. Every object has two faces; you should endeavour to discover and adopt that which is best.

If I foresaw that a candidate would become eminent either in learning or piety, I would employ every effort to determine him; but when I do not know what may happen, I am extremely reserved, and never advise any one to become a Friar.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 13th May, 1748.

## L E T T E R VIII.

TO THE PRELATE CERATI.

**I** Will not pardon your depriving the Public of a multitude of anecdotes which are familiar to you, and which, if collected,

lected, would prove extremely interesting.—Henceforth when I see you, I will take my pencil and write. What would become of Science, were all the learned to pursue your plan? Conversation might be brilliant, but reading would not be so by any means.

Monsignor Cerati ought to think, that while he speaks, he is only useful to those who are about him; but if he would write, he may prove of service to the most distant.

A good book becomes the patrimony of the whole world, and equally finds its way to the Russian and the Italian. The Pope ought to oblige you, under pain of excommunication, to give the Public by means of the Press, all that knowledge which you now withhold from them. But perhaps, having seen foreign countries, you may have become such a *Tramontane*, as to think of eluding the judgement of a Roman decree. Cardinal Porto Carrero said to me lately, when speaking of you, *he has seen a great deal, read a great deal, and retains every thing; but that will be of*

*no use to us, because he will carry his knowledge with him to the other world.*

Too much has been written, and I am grieved when I reflect upon all the productions which licentious spirits have brought forth; but we shall never think that too much can be wrote, if the writers were to produce the excellent things which you know.—As for me, I will have it printed, that they cannot admire you too much, nor repeat too often how much I have the honour to be, &c.

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## LETTER IX.

TO THE MARQUIS CLERICI, A MILANESE.

**A**LLOW me to inform you, that Jacques Piovi is in the greatest misery. I do not acquaint you with his being one of the Pope's foldiers, for that would be a poor title of recommendation to an Austrian Officer: but I remind you of his having six children; that he



has kept his bed these nine months, and lastly, that he is your godson.

Generosity, which chiefly marks your character, and which only seeks opportunities of giving, has here an opportunity of being gratified. If you were one of those ordinary souls who never oblige but with reluctance, I should not think of importuning you. I do not love to obtain benefits by force ; I wish them to flow freely from their source, and to have their principle in magnanimity.

I think I see you smile at the different complexion of this letter from those daily written to you by the gentlemen of your own profession. The signature of *Frere Ganganelli* can have no other merit in your eyes, except that of showing with what profound respect I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 9th Sept. 1748.

LETTER

## L E T T E R X.

T O M A D A M \* \* \*.

**T**RUE devotion, Madam, neither consists in a careless air, nor in a brown habit. Most votaries imagine, tho' I don't know why, that cloaths of a dark colour please the celestial beings more than those of a lighter and more lively hue; yet we find the Angels are always painted either in white or blue. I do not love piety which proclaims itself; modesty does not depend upon colours; if it be decent in dress and manner, it is what it really ought to be.

Observe, moreover, that the lady who talks scandal in an assembly, or appears peevish, or in an ill humour against mankind, is most frequently dressed in brown. Singularity is so little allied to true devotion, that we are ordered in the Gospel to wash our faces when we fast, that we may not appear remarkable.

I am therefore of opinion, Madam, that you should make no alteration in the form

or colour of your dress. Let your heart be directed to God, and all your actions relate to him; and that is the sum of religion.

The world would not have ridiculed religion so much, had not its votaries given room for it. Almost always inflamed with bitter zeal, they are never satisfied except with themselves; and they would have every one submit to their whims, because their piety is often the effect only of caprice.

Every person who is truly pious, is patient, gentle and humble; unsuspecting of ill, never splenetick, and conceals when he cannot excuse the faults of his neighbour.—Every truly pious person *laughs with those that laugh, and weeps with them that weep*, according to the advice of St. Paul, *to be wise with soberness*, because there should be temperance in all things.

In fine, true devotion is charity, and without it nothing we can do is of use to salvation. False devotees do little less injury

injury to the cause of religion, than the openly prophane. Always ready to kindle against those who do not agree with them in their humours and opinions, they have a restless, impetuous, persecuting zeal, and are commonly either fanatical or superstitious, hypocrites or ignorant. Jesus Christ does not spare them in the Gospel, that he may teach us to be on our guard against them.

When you find, Madam, that there is neither rancour in your heart, nor pride in your mind, nor singularity in your actions, and that you observe the precepts of God and his church without affectation or trifling, you may then believe you are in the way of salvation.

Above all things, make your domestics happy by abstaining from tormenting them. They are counterparts of ourselves, and we should constantly lighten their yoke;—the way to be well served, is to have always a serene countenance. True piety is at all times tranquil, while false devotion is incessantly varying.

Support your nieces according to their rank, but do not exact of them to do precisely as you do, because you have a particular turn for mortification.

This article would require a whole letter. Young people are often disgusted with piety, because too great perfection is required; and works of penitence even tire ourselves, when they are not moderate. The common way of life is the most certain, though perhaps not the most perfect:—it is being too violent, to forbid all visiting and relaxation. Take care that your ghostly Father be not too mystical, and that his instructions do not end in making you scrupulous, rather than a good Christian.

Does piety require us to be self-tormentors? Religion teacheth us what we should do, and what we ought to believe; and there can be no better instructor than the Gospel. Mingle solitude with society, and get acquainted with such only as will neither lead you to melancholy, nor to dissipation.



Vary your reading. There are some books for recreation, which may succeed the more serious. St. Paul, in giving rules for decent conversation, permits us to say things that are chearful and agreeable; *quæcumque amabilia*.

It were to serve God like a slave, to imagine we are always offending. The yoke of the Lord is easy, and his burden is light. *Love God*, says St. Augustine, *and do what thou wilt*; because then you will do nothing but what is agreeable to him, and you will act with respect to him, as a son towards a father whom he loves.

Above all things, be charitable; and the more so, as you are in a situation to assist the poor. Religion has humanity for a basis, and they who are not charitable cannot be Christians.

I do not by any means advise you to give to communities: besides that they do not want it, it is not just to impoverish families to enrich them. There is a continual outcry against the rapaciousness of Monks, and you should not give occasion for new complaints upon that subject. Our  
repu-

reputation ought to be our greatest riches, which should be founded on disinterestedness, and the practice of every virtue.

Although a friend to my profession, I shall never engage any one to make presents to us; nor persuade anybody to become a Monk: I dread giving room for reproach and repentance, as I dread tiring you, should I prolong this epistle, which has no other merit in my eyes, than the opportunity it procures me of assuring you of the respect with which I have the honour to be,

Madam, &c.

ROME, 2 January 1749.

LET

## L E T T E R XI.

TO THE REV. FATHER \* \* \*, A FRANCISCAN  
FRIAR.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

**F**OR three days together I have been scribbling over all that you seem to desire. I have endeavoured to introduce into this discourse, the pathetic, the sublime, the simple, and the moderate, so as to have where-withal to please different tastes. You must endeavour not only to learn it well, but to pronounce it well;—not merely for yourself, but likewise for your hearers, who will be both numerous and respectable.

This little work will savour of haste, but then it will have the more fire. My imagination kindles like a Volcano, when I am exceedingly hurried; I collect all my ideas, thoughts, perceptions, and sentiments, and the whole together bubbles in my head and upon my paper, most surprisingly.

Not.

Notwithstanding the warmth which you will find in this production, I have arranged it as well as I could. I shall be satisfied with it, if you are satisfied, and I most earnestly wish it.

The war burns more fiercely than ever, and they write me from Flanders that the towns fall like tiles in a storm. God send the French may always prove conquerors! You know how much I love that nation, and how much I interest myself in its success. I should certainly have been born in France:—it is the turn of my heart and mind which makes me think so.

Do not tell any one that you have heard from me. The Monks are acute, and they will suspect that your discourse came from me, if you by any means recal me to their remembrance.

I am always wrapt up in my own thoughts, which are either open or reserved, according to the work which Providence imposes upon me, or accident produces. My day is often an unintelligible chaos;—I must pass from one task to another; and these

these extravagances are more unlike than white is to black, or day to night. I then throw myself into the vortex of the Brotherhood, talking and laughing *ab hoc & ab hac*, because I must renew my existence, I am so much exhausted. I frequently leave the old folks to chat with the young ones, where we joke like children: it is the best way of refreshing ourselves after quitting deep study, and it was the method of the celebrated Muratori.

Adieu! Love me, because you ought, since I am, as I have been, and always shall be, your best friend.

From the CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES.

## L E T T E R XII.

TO A CANON OF OSIMO.

SIR,

**R**ELIGION shut up in the bosom of God from all eternity, produced itself the moment that the universe sprung from nothing, and came to repose itself in the



the heart of Adam. There was the first temple upon earth ; and it is from thence that the most fervent desires are continually exhaled towards Heaven. Eve, formed in innocence as well as her husband, partook of the inestimable advantage of blessing every instant the Author of their being. The birds united their warblings, and all Nature applauded the heavenly concert.

Such was religion, and such its worship, till sin came into the world to stain its purity ; — then Innocence fled away, and Penitence endeavoured to supply its place. Adam, banished from an earthly paradise, found no longer any thing but briars and thorns, where he had formerly gathered the fairest flowers and most excellent fruits.

The just Abel offered his own heart as a burnt-offering to God, and sealed with his blood the love which he had for truth and justice. Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, served as guides to one another in observing the law of Nature, as the only religion which at that time was pleasing in the sight of God.

Moses

Moses appeared like a new star seen shining upon Mount Sinai, at the side of the sun of Justice; and the Ten Commandments were given him to be obeyed without any alteration. Thunder was the external sign of this new alliance, and the Jewish people became the depository of a law written by Wisdom itself.

Notwithstanding the zeal of Moses and Joshua, and all the leaders of the people of God, the Christian religion alone could produce worshippers in spirit and in truth. Every thing which was esteemed holy before that time, already belonged to it; and when it was presented to the world proceeding from the Incarnate Word, it was established on the ruins of Judaism, like a beloved daughter, *filia dilecta*, and it changed the face of the whole world.

Wicked desires were forbidden, as well as wicked actions, and the purest and most sublime virtues sprung from the blood of a multitude of Martyrs.

The Church succeeded the Synagogue, and the Apostles who were its pillars, had successors who were to transmit their office  
to

to the end of time. According to that heavenly plan, and this divine œconomy; the substance succeeded to the shadow; for the old law was only the type of Jesus Christ; and the evidence of it after death, will be the recompence of faith. God will be seen as he is, and the faithful will rest eternally with him.

Behold in what manner you should set out in your work upon religion;—go to its source, and shew its excellence; ascend with it to heaven, from whence it descended, and whither it will return.

Religion will never be perfectly established till it has no other principle but charity; for neither knowledge nor exterior magnificence constitute its merit, but the love of God alone. It is the basis of our worship, and if we are not persuaded of this truth, we are only the images of virtue.

I consider religion as a chain, of which God is the first link, and which reacheth to eternity. Without this tie every thing is dissolved and overthrown;—men are creatures only deserving of contempt;—the universe not worth our attention; for it  
is

is neither the sun nor the earth that makes its merit, but the glory of being a part of the Supreme Being; and according to the words of the Apostle, to subsist only in Jesus Christ. *Omnia per ipsum & in ipso constant.*

Take care that there be nothing in your work which is unworthy of your subject; and when you meet in your way some famous unbeliever, or celebrated heresiarch, overthrow him with that courage which truth inspires, but without virulence or ostentation.

It is so agreeable to support the cause of a religion which has united every testimony of heaven and earth in its favour, that it should not be defended but with moderation. Flights of genius have nothing in common with truth. *It is sufficient to shew religion such as it is,* said the holy Charles Borromée, *to make the necessity of it be known.* Men who would give up religion, must either be reduced to eat acorns, or return to their original state of violence and war.

I have studied religion more than forty-five years, and am always more and more

struck with it. It is too elevated to be of human invention, although the wicked say it is. Fill your mind with the spirit of God before you begin to write, that you may not make use of vain words. Where the heart is not perfectly consenting with the pen which expresth holy truths, it is seldom that the Reader can be affected. Penetrate their souls with the same spirit which God himself brought upon earth, and your book will produce wonderful effects.

What has made *The Imitation of Jesus Christ* so valuable and affecting, is, that the Author (Gersen, Abbé of Verceil in Italy) has transfused into it all that holy charity with which he himself was divinely animated.

Gerson is commonly confounded with Gersen; nevertheless it is easy to prove, that neither Gerson nor Thomas à Kempis were the authors of that matchless book; and this I own gives me infinite pleasure, because I am delighted with the thought of such an excellent work being wrote by an Italian. There is an evident proof in



the fifth Chapter of the fourth Book, that it was not a Frenchman who wrote *The Imitation*. It is there expressed, that the Priest clothed in his sacerdotal habit carries the cross of Jesus Christ before him; now all the world knows, that the chasubles † in France differ from those in Italy, in this, that they have the cross upon their backs; but I will not write a dissertation, being content to assure you that I am, &c.

ROME, 6th Feb. 1749.

## L E T T E R XIII.

TO COUNT ALGAROTTI.

**T**HE Pope is always great, and always agreeable by his *bons mots*. He said the other day, that he always loved you, and it would be a great pleasure to him to see you again. He speaks of the King of Prussia with admiration; and it must be owned that he is a monarch whose history will make one of the noblest monuments of the eighteenth century. Confess that I am

† Chasubles are a kind of copes which the Priests wear at Mass.

very generous, for he laughs at the Court of Rome and the Monks, as much as possible.

Your last letter is full of philosophy;—I have shewn it to our common friends, who find in it the fire of Italy, with the phlegm of Germany. This mixture works wonders in the eyes of men of sense and genius.

Cardinal Querini will not be satisfied without having you some time at Brescia; he told me one day, that he would invite you to come and consecrate his Library; he is enriching it as much as he can, doubtless that it may be worthy of you.

You will enliven Bologna when you return;—the Muses are not asleep, but they are not so animated as they were formerly; such a spirit as yours is wanted to electrify the Academicians.

Rome does not make me forget that town where I passed so much time. The remembrance of the learned men I knew there, renders it always present. If the will of the Pontiff did not keep me tied here, I would willingly go and end my days there, seeing nothing in the career  
which

which I have to pass, that can be more agreeable or more advantageous. I should possess myself, and be perfectly content, though it be but a very small possession. The domain of my knowledge is of so little extent, that by reducing myself within my own sphere, I am confined to the simplest mediocrity.

Natural Philosophy tells me from time to time, that I neglect her ; — I answer, I am a greater loser than you. But what would you have me do ? Theology is become my sovereign, and I must obey her without reserve. They who do not know her, suppose her to be a chimera, or an idol ; but for me, who consider her under every relation, and in her whole extent, I acknowledge her to be the true light of the soul, and the life of the Elect. Nothing that flows from God, nothing that he says, nothing that relates to him, can be trifling or indifferent. There is no harm in my preaching to a philosopher who does not commonly go to church, and whose residence at Potzdam has not sanctified him.

There are three men of you there, whose talents would be of great service to religion, if you would change their direction.— You, Monf. Voltaire, and Monf. Maupertuis; but that is not the ton of the present age, and you will be in the fashion.

In expectation of this miracle, which God can bring about some time or another, although there is little appearance of it, I have the honour to be with the highest respect, &c.

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## L E T T E R    X I V .

T O   T H E   A B B E   L A M I .

**I** WOULD gladly revisit Frascati, that delightful dwelling, where the multitude of *jets d'eau* shooting up towards Heaven without interruption, is a lively image of the elevation and humiliation of weak mortals:—I have tired my limbs and my eyes by walking and observing them. The country is not agreeable, but as we open the two great books of botany  
and

and astronomy; the one under our feet, the other over our heads.

It is wonderful to observe how the soul is elevated one moment to a star, and the next falls down to a grain of sand; how it expands over the immensity of the heavens, and how it shrinks back upon itself; how it analyses the light, anatomises an insect; how incessant are its wishes, yet how limited its faculties! We may say then with Danté, *that the soul is the greatest wonder of the universe.*

The study of Nature is necessary to know the Author of Nature; and the great Newton said, that an Astronomer or Anatomist absolutely could not be an Atheist. The air is not perceivable, although we every where feel its influence; it is an image of God himself, who, tho' invisible, informs us every instant of his presence and action.

I have recovered a new life in the country to dedicate it more than ever to business. One of the Ancients said, that Death should find an Emperor standing; and I



add, that he should find a Counsellor of the Holy Office with his pen in his hand. You will allow that I have not placed myself amiss.

That last moment is approaching every instant, and time is almost nothing. The past, the present, and the future are so near each other, that one has not leisure to distinguish them. The year has scarce begun its course when it is at an end.

I have never wrote a single word, nor made a single comma, without looking upon it as a point cut off from my life. This manner of thinking is the best means of driving away Ambition; but I do not believe that she will ever come to knock at my gate. I despise Fortune too much for her to make me any advances.

But it is a singular good fortune that I can assure you of all the attachment with which I am, &c.

ROME, 12th Oct. 1749.

## L E T T E R XV.

TO A CARMELITE NUN.

**I**T appears, my reverend Mother, that God Almighty has preferred mountains as the properest places for displaying his glory and his mercy. I see by the Scriptures, that Mount Sinai, Mount Thabor, the Mount of Olives, and Mount Calvary, were the most privileged spots in the world, on account of the miracles which were wrought there : and I see in the History of the Church, Mount Cassino and Mount Carmel as the source of two religious Orders, who do honour to religion by their penitence.

Holy Theresa, your illustrious Reformatrix, is one of the greatest souls that God hath raised up for the good of Christianity : a parent of the Church for her knowledge and writings ; and a model of penitence by her austerities. There is not a cloud which can in the least obscure her actions. Always with God to study him ;

always with the faithful to instruct them ; and always in the same degree of perfection ; she is a prodigy of science and of sanctity.

Her works are not sufficiently known ; —the best is undoubtedly the wonderful harmony which reigns among so many illustrious females, to whom she is a support and model.

You have no occasion for any instructions, my reverend Mother, but what have been given by this great Saint. She hath said every thing, she hath foreseen every thing, and she hath taught every thing. The Nuns cannot choose a better director ; and it is to her that they should address themselves, if their piety has none of those too keen affections which hurt true devotion.

Consult holy Theresa then, and not Brother Ganganelli, who is the weakest person I know. I can only glean after those who have reaped a full harvest ; and all the correspondence that I can have with you, is to beg that you will be so good as to pray

pray for me. The prayers of the Carmelites are the most agreeable perfume which can ascend to the throne of God. But not to interrupt that silence any longer, which is prescribed you, I shall content myself with adding to this letter the respect with which I shall be, all my life,

Your most humble, &c.

At the CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,

19 June, 1749.

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## L E T T E R XVI.

TO CARDINAL VALENTI, SECRETARY  
OF STATE.

MOST EMINENT,

**T**HIS letter is the supplication of a poor Monk, who prays for a poor man, who is less than nothing in the eyes of such a Lord as you; but a subject worthy of all your attention, if you look upon him with that Christian philosophy which places mankind on a level, and directs all your actions.

The subject in question is Dominick Baldi, a domestic who has been long attached to your service, and who has been dismissed for a fall of passion. As he comes from the place where I was born, and I know him to have a number of good qualities, especially his singular attachment to you, I venture to supplicate you in his favour.

My Lord, you have a great soul, and I am sure of success, if you will only hearken a little:—your heart will be my best intercessor with you. Men are not angels;—servants have their faults, and so have their masters.

I should have solicited this favour in person; but probably I should have been obliged to wait in an anti-chamber, on account of the people and business which beset you, and I have not time to lose. There are so many burdens of every kind imposed upon me, that I have need of all my courage not to sink under them.



If you hearken to my prayer, my gratitude shall be as lasting and extensive, as the profound respect with which I am

Your Eminence's

most humble, &c.

ROME, the 1st of the Month.

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## L E T T E R XVII.

TO THE SAME.

**I** AM quite vain that an atom should fix the attention of your Eminence, and that a poor wretch who had only such a pitiful recommendation as mine, should be received again into your service. This goodness does you the more honour, as it shews you to be a great man without prejudices, that is to say, a phenomenon.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, the 22d of the Month.

L E T.

## LETTER XVIII.

TO THE PRELATE CERATI.

**C**HAINED down by my profession, tormented with business, and hurried away by the times, I cannot dispose of my days so as to be able to join you. I am so much engaged, that I have only six hours in the day. I wish to God, that all those whose time hangs heavy upon their hands could make a present of their spare moments to me; not that I might lead a longer life, but that I might give myself up to study more at my ease, without the dread of becoming too contemplative.

You are happy in being at Florence, where you have no court to make except to monuments, libraries, or learned men, and where there is no danger of being ill received.

I will immediately send you the memorial you desire;—it shall be written with all possible moderation, because it is conformable with charity, and because works  
written

written with passion, though they have truth on their side, do no sort of good.

In spite of all your eulogies on the pleasures of gardening, it is impossible for me to be fond of them ; I know nothing but meadows and fields. When I have need of a walk, chance finds me a thousand little charming paths where I exceedingly love to wander.

The Pope only discharges his duty, in vindicating the memory of Cardinal Nori. It would be cruel to declare a man a heretic, because he follows the opinions of the Augustines or Thomists ; that is to say, doctrines solemnly approved by the Church ; but when we are impelled by fanaticism, we see nothing, and become deaf to reason.

The good Bishop of Spoleto still enjoys excellent health ; he writes to me with as much gaiety as if he were only twenty. He is like the Pope (Benedict XIV.), who is never sad.---He complains that the Hermits who live almost under his eye are too dissipated :---it is a growing evil in almost all the communities ;---they no longer study

study but in extracts. Provided they have only the scarf-skin of the Sciences, they think themselves great doctors. I don't know to what this will lead us, but I am afraid we shall insensibly fall back into the ignorance of the tenth century. Science is like the moon, which after being seen in full, shews only her half, and at last becomes intirely hid.

Sleep, which I must not neglect, tells me that we must part. What comforts me is, that my friendship for you never sleeps, and that I am day and night irrevocably

Your most humble, &c.

ROME, 8th July 1749.

## L E T T E R    X I X .

T O   C O U N T   \* \* \*

S I R,

**I** WAS too much the friend of your father, and am too much your friend, to let you go astray as you now do, without recalling you to yourself. Is it possible that that dear child whom I have seen so gentle, good, and virtuous in his father's house,

house, has so totally forgot what he was, as to become rude, insolent, and irreligious? It is with the utmost difficulty I can persuade myself that it is so; but I am so often assured of it, and by the company with whom you associate, that I can no longer doubt.

I beg of you to come and see me, and in the effusions of a heart which tenderly loves you, I will tell you, not what anger inspires, not what prejudice suggests, not what is bitter in reproaches, but all that the sincerest attachment can dictate, to withdraw you from that abyfs into which bad company has hurried you.

You will neither find me an imperious monitor, nor an angry pedagogue, but a friend, a brother, who will speak to you as he would to himself, with the same lenity, and with the same calmness. I know that youth is fiery, and that there is great difficulty in escaping from the ways of the world, when we are rich, and given up to passions. But do not honour, decency, reason, and religion speak more powerfully than the passions and senses?

What



What is man, my dear friend, if he takes no counsel but of his corrupted heart? Alas! I find within me, as well as you find in yourself, wherewithal to lead me astray, if I did not hearken to my conscience and my duty; for illusion and corruption are the only portions of humanity.

I expect you with the greatest impatience, to stretch forth my arms and embrace you. Do not startle at the sight of my cloister or my habit. On account of my profession, I ought to be the more charitable. We will bewail together the loss of a father who was so necessary to you; I will endeavour to give you such advice as to make him live again in you, by the excellence of your morals. Do not disgrace his memory by the scandal of a disorderly life.

There is nothing lost yet, if you will deign to hearken to me; for I am confident that the plan of life which I will trace out to you, will restore every thing as it should be. Do not be afraid; I will not send you to do penance either with the Capuchins or the Chartreux, for I do not love violence. God will inspire us: God  
does

does not abandon those who return to him: I shall not stir abroad to-morrow, that I may receive you.

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## L E T T E R XX.

TO THE SAME.

**I**S it possible, my dear Sir, that you not only did not come to me, as I requested you would, but that you took care to be denied when I came to see you? Alas! what would your father say, to whom you promised in his dying moments, that you would place intire confidence in my advice, and that you would always make it your duty to cultivate my friendship? Once more, what would he say? Am not I the same person who have carried you so often in my arms, who with the greatest pleasure have seen you growing, who have given you your first instructions, and to whom you have testified the strongest attachment, on a thousand occasions?

Would

Would you have me fall upon my knees, to induce you to restore to me your friendship? I will do so;—nothing shall be too much for me, when I am to recal a friend to his duty.

If you had not a noble heart and a good understanding, I should despair of your reformation, and of my own advice; but you have inherited a worthy soul, and an uncommon sagacity. Do you imagine that it can be a pleasure to me to find fault with you? None but false devotees find satisfaction in putting themselves into a passion. I have happily read the Gospel, which is the rule both of your conduct and mine, enough to know how Jesus Christ received sinners, and how attentive we ought to be not to extinguish the smoking lamp, nor to break the bruised reed. I have not forgot that John the Evangelist got on horseback, notwithstanding his advanced age, to search after a young man whom he had bred up, and who avoided him. Besides, have not you long known me for a man who is neither haughty nor peevish, and who can compassionate

donate human frailty? The more you avoid me, the more I shall think you guilty. Do not hearken to your companions, but let your heart speak, and I shall instantly see you. Mine prompts me never to abandon you. I will persecute you because I love you, and I will give you no rest till we are reconciled.

It is because I am your best friend that I seek to find you, at a time when scarce any of your relations will hear your name mentioned.

If you dread my remonstrances, I shall say nothing to you, because I shall be convinced that you will accuse yourself, and allow me no time to speak. Try at least one visit; and if it is not agreeable, you shall never see me more. But I know your heart—I know my own—and I am certain, that after one interview you will have no desire to leave me.

I ought naturally to have a greater ascendancy over your mind, who have known you these twenty years, than all the young associates who surround you, to de-  
your

your your estate, and are your friends only to ruin your health and reputation.

If my tears can affect you, I protest to you that they flow at this instant, and from the most precious motive in the world—Religion and Friendship. Come and dry them up; it will prove to me that you still remember your father, and are sensible to the distress of a friend.

ROME, 1st Feb. 1750.

## LETTER XXI.

TO THE ABBE NICOLINI.

SIR,

THE picture of infidelity you have drawn alarms, without astonishing, me;—besides its being foretold, even to the least *iota*, in the holy scriptures, the mind is capable of going astray the greatest lengths, when the heart is once corrupted. From a desire that there should be no God to punish crimes, the wicked conclude that he doth not exist---*Dixit impius*



*pius in corde suo, Non est Deus.* Deism leads imperceptibly to atheism;—we have no compass, when we have no religion; it is the only prop by which we can be reasonably supported.

Notwithstanding the dreadful consequences of this new philosophy, I am of opinion that we ought not to exasperate those who profess it. There are people unconvinced who deserve to be pitied, because, after all, faith is a gift from God. Jesus Christ, who thundered at the Pharisees, said nothing to the Sadducees. Unbelievers will be much easier led back by gentleness than by severity. They affect a haughtiness to those who wound them keenly; and the more so, because they are answered frequently with much worse reasoning than is found even in their own discourses and writings. The most petty Ecclesiastic eagerly sets about attacking them, without thinking, that though his zeal is laudable, his understanding by no means keeping pace with it, he may do more harm than good.

Converts are not made either by declamation or invective. Examples, reason, and moderation are wanted, and we should begin by allowing, that religion has indeed mysteries which are incomprehensible, and which cannot all be explained. There is a chain reaching from heaven to earth, and unless we keep hold of the links we shall never confute infidelity. Vague declamation is not reasoning. To contend with able men in the arts of sophistry, knowledge, method, and precision are wanted.

When I meet with people who have the prejudices of this new philosophy, which happens pretty often, I begin by inspiring them with confidence, and speak to them with the greatest candour. They are sensible of this, if they have had only the slightest tincture of education, and that at least lessens their prejudices.

Every impetuous zeal which would bring down fire from heaven, excites only hatred. The Church has the reputation of being of a persecuting spirit, in the eyes of unbelievers, from many of its ministers shewing

shewing a too ardent zeal. A good cause supports itself;---so that Religion needs only to produce its proofs, its traditions, its works, and its gentleness, to be respected. Christianity of itself overthrows every sect which may be inclined to schism, or which breathes a spirit of animosity.

I frequently meet with people who really detest the whole body of the Clergy, and those are just the people whom I endeavour to be well with. If I had leisure and abilities to combat the new philosophy, I have the presumption to believe that no Philosopher would complain of me. I would lay down principles which could not be denied; and when I met in my way with those too celebrated men who profess infidelity, I would shew them with the greatest candour, that they have not taken the holy Scriptures in their true sense, or that they have no good reasons for denying their authenticity.

I am sensible I should not convert them, since it is God alone who enlighteneth the understanding and changeth the heart;

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but at least they would not be so apt to inveigh against the defenders of Religion.

We must endeavour to gain something, if we cannot gain all.

If God bears with unbelievers, we ought to bear with them, since they make a part of his plan; and by them religion appears stronger, and the faith of the righteous is exercised.

It is not at all surprising that ages of superstition should lead the way to an age of infidelity;—but these are tempests which pass over, and only shew the face of heaven more pure and serene.

The more that unbelievers increase, the more ought the Ministers of the Gospel to be attentive to render religion respectable by their love of study, and the purity of their morals. Behold a number of things which you knew before.---My pen leads me on insensibly;---it is a fault with which I frequently reproach it, but it will not correct itself. I beg your pardon for it, in favour of my intention, and in consideration of the pleasure I have in assuring you of the respectful and sincere attachment with which I am, &c.

It is some time since I had any accounts of M. Cerati. I am the more uneasy, because he should have answered me upon something of consequence.

ROME, 28 February, 1750.

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L E T T E R XXII.  
TO CARDINAL CRESCENCI

MOST EMINENT,

**Y**OU have solved the case of conscience as it ought to be, conformably with the opinion of the wisest Doctors, and especially according to the sentiments of St. Thomas, whose suffrage is of the greatest weight.

The Holy Office hath not condemned the men his Eminency speaks to me of, as really having commerce with the Devil, but for abusing the most holy words of the service of the Mass and the Psalms, to carry on their extravagant operations. It is known that forcerers now-a-days are not supernatural agents, and



that a belief of Necromancy (tho' according to the Scripture the Devil is a real being) is almost always the effect of superstition, or the work of a troubled brain.

I kiss your hands with the profoundest respect, in expectation of the moment when we shall kiss your feet, if the prophecy attributed to St. Philip of Neri takes place, as it is commonly reported.

FR. L. GANGANELLI.

ROME. 1st March 1750.

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L E T T E R XXIII.

TO A GENTLEMAN OF RAVENNA.

SIR,

**I** COULD never have suspected that you would apply to an obscure Monk like me, to decide a family dispute. There are a great number of learned Lawyers here, who can give you a proper opinion.

Besides my incapacity in this affair, I do not love to give advice in secular mat-

ters. I remember that St. Paul prohibits every minister of the Lord from interfering in temporals. A man who is dead to the world, should not intermeddle in the affairs of it. Every religious Society that neglects this maxim, will sink into oblivion sooner or later;—as every Monk who intrudes into families to know their secrets, to regulate marriages and testaments, is equally contemptible and dangerous.

We have too many duties of our own, to have leisure to busy ourselves in other people's affairs; and at present we should be detested, if we dared to attempt it. We made noise enough formerly, by striving only to preserve the use or property of our own rights; let us not meddle now-a-days with the inheritances of the world. St. Francis, who preached up disinterestedness and poverty, would anathematize us, if he saw us attempting to undertake the province of secular affairs.

All that I ought, or can do, is to exhort you to peace and concord, and not to shew a criminal avidity for the things of this life, which passeth away, and leaves us nothing but our works. Let us endeavour

78    LETTERS OF GANGANELLI,  
that they be good, that we may not appear  
before God empty-handed.

ROME, 3d March, 1750.

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L E T T E R. XXIV.

TO CARDINAL QUIRINI.

MOST EMINENT,

**I** LOVE to see a Library in your Emi-  
nency's hands ;—one is certain that it  
will not be covered with dust, nor remain  
unemployed. By the manner in which you  
speak to me of it, and the discernment I  
know you possess, it will be worth the admi-  
ration of the curious. I shall always re-  
member the having passed a day with your  
Eminency and Cardinal Passionei, and a  
number of learned men ;——it will be the  
fairest and most precious epoch of my life.

I then saw the most learned men in Eu-  
rope, and I drank at the source from the  
two finest intellectual rivers in the world.  
There they agitated the most important  
questions, without affectation, obstinacy  
or

or pride. Only the half-learned and half-wise make themselves noted by their obstinacy and vanity; but what struck me most is, that genius, which does not always accompany learning, seemed there to spring from the womb of science, like lightning from heaven.

I should have been glad to see our modern Philosophers with these two great men; and the more so, as they would have been delighted with their moderation. Some time ago I reminded Cardinal Passionei of this anecdote; and his memory, which is very great, and always ready, repeated succinctly all that was said at that time.

I very much wish, my Lord, to be able to accompany you to Mount Cassino. You must appear radiant there, like Moses upon Mount Sinai:---it is your center, and the cradle in which you have acquired the greatest knowledge, to perpetuate the succession of so many illustrious men as have sprung from thence.

It appears to me, my Lord, if I dare make that confession to you, that your last letter to the Protestant Clergy, is a

little too dry. Your Eminency knows better than I do, how necessary it is to use sweet oil to gain over profelytes. Nothing can be added to the profound respect with which

I am, &c.

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### L E T T E R XXV.

TO R. P. ORSI, A DOMINICAN, BUT SINCE BE-  
COME CARDINAL.

MY REV. FATHER,

I HAVE been twice to call upon you, without having the happiness to find you, although you are so sedentary a recluse. I wanted to thank you for the book you sent me. I congratulate Italy on the happy production with which you have enriched it. M. Fleury had occasion for a writer to fill up the chasms in his history; for it must be confessed, notwithstanding the respect which I have for his memory, that he has slightly touched a number of very important facts. Perhaps he was not



not possessed of sufficient memoirs for some articles: we should weigh the charge well, before we condemn so great a man.

In the mean time, I cannot pardon his having said almost nothing of the Church of Ravenna, so celebrated in the annals of Italy by a multitude of incidents relative to its Exarchs. Sometimes it is dangerous to be solicitous of being too concise;--- this gives sketches only, instead of finished pieces.

We reproach M. Fleury with being too zealous for the liberties of the Gallican Church; and the French will accuse you, my reverend Father, of supporting the ultramontane opinions too warmly.

See then how difficult it is to write to please every Government; but sensible men give up to the French and Romans their different pretensions, so that the faith be not affected. Every country has its opinion, as every individual his whim.

I wish that your labours may meet with a brilliant recompence, not for your glory, but the glory of the Church; you have no occasion for the purple to

render you illustrious. As for me, I think myself the most honoured of men, when you receive with cordiality the sincere and respectful sentiments with which I am irrevocably, &c.

ROME, 11 June, 1750.

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## L E T T E R   XXVI.

### T O   A   P R E L A T E.

MY LORD,

**I** HAVE written so much, that my hand ought to be tired; but it has more vigour than ever, while it is employed in expressing the sentiments with which you inspire me.

Notwithstanding my occupations, I have done all that you prescribed. I have seen the person you mentioned;---I have got the better of her resistance.---She will take care of the little orphan, as you desire. Other people's misfortunes render me singularly eloquent; then my heart, soul, and mind, speak all at once.

The

The Monks are reproached with being selfish;---in that case, I should never have been one;---but it is a calumny which I will not attempt to refute. The meanesses of human nature are to be found in Cloisters, only because there are men there:---yet there are men every where. This does not prevent our seeing a great many virtues in a Monastery. I protest to you, I am ashamed of myself when I observe some venerable personages with whom I live, who are employed in nothing but doing good offices, from morning till night. The world judges of Communities only from some scandals which unfortunately blaze abroad, without attending to the talents and the virtues which are perpetuated there.

The monastic life would be very honourable, if it was duly honoured: and men powerful both in words and in works would be found there, on every occasion. Emulation is absolutely necessary in a Cloister, to preserve a love of study; as ambition is its scandal and ruin. There is no greater monster in

Church or State than an hypocritical ambitious clergyman, who, professing to be humble, is puffed up with pride;--- a man who, wearing an outside of poverty, seeks only to enrich himself;--- a false devotee, who announces himself the servant of God, yet is only the slave of his own passions.

When I think that there are Monks, who fly to destruction to obtain a wretched superiority of rank or preferment, subject to a thousand vexations and a thousand inconveniencies, I cannot define man; and I say, that he damns himself for a very little matter.

O my dear solitude! my books and my labours! what vexation would it give me, were I obliged to give you up, to mix in the tumult of business and honours! Even the title of Majesty would not make amends to a man for the liberty he loses, when he becomes a king.

I was taught to believe from my earliest days, that the honour of having an immortal soul is the greatest possible glory; and happily I have retained the lesson.

I would

I would not say this to all the world, for there are very few capable of comprehending it; but you, who have a relish for the inestimable pleasures of existing and thinking, understand me. I embrace you with all my heart, and am without reserve

Your friend and servant.

ROME, 6th November, 1750.

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## L E T T E R XXVII.

TO MONSIGNOR HENRIQUEZ.

MY LORD,

**Y**OU deign to consult me, while it is I rather that have need of your counsel.

Your understanding and piety are known, and every one confesseth that you are the best guide, and the most learned Doctor.

However, to shew my obedience, I must say that the deposit ought to be sent to *Peter*, although it was destined for him by *John*, solely on account of his attachment



ment to the Roman Catholic religion, and tho' he has unfortunately changed his faith.

It is only necessary to acquaint him with the intention of his benefactor, when he made that bequest in his favour. But I do not think that the person charged with the deposit, can withhold it from him because he has changed his religion.

You say, my Lord, that there are people who maintain that it may be made a gift to some Monastery; and I dare assert, Monk as I am, that it would be an unjust appropriation:—in the first place, because it should be given to him to whom it was bequeathed; secondly, because in the partition of property, families should always have the preference; thirdly and lastly, because the poor, who have no means of subsistence, ought chiefly to be supported.

Providence is the resource of Communities, and their dependance ought to be rather upon That, than on human means. All religious Orders are only estimable as they imitate Jesus Christ; but we too often have some worldly views for the support of Monasteries, without reflecting that the  
true

true Christian has no permanent habitation in this world, and that nothing happens but as it pleaseth God.

Nevertheless I submit my judgment to yours, never having any obstinate attachment to my own opinions. I display them conformably to the dictates of my conscience, and I take every possible precaution to be informed; for there is no evil we are not capable of, even while we purpose doing good, if we have no other guide than an ignorant devotion.

I have the honour to be, &c.

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## L E T T E R XXVIII.

TO THE ABBESS OF A MONASTERY.

MY MOST REV. MOTHER,

**F**ROM the narrative which you have sent me, it appears that you cannot conveniently take vigorous measures. If your Nuns are become dissipated, and they lead you as they please, there is an end of all

all rule. Dissipation, and especially the Parlour, are the ruin of all Convents of Nuns. Recollection and application only can preserve order in the different Communities. The Cloister is an insupportable yoke, while the world is to be seen, and the more frequent opportunities the Nuns have of conversing, the more they must become disgusted with their condition.

I suppose that you frequently assemble your Community, and, like a good mother who loves her children, speak the effusions of your heart to them, upon the necessity of fulfilling their duties. I would then have you endeavour to persuade them, that your conscience reproaches you for your ill-placed lenity; and that if you are obliged to appear more severe, it is because you have a soul to be saved.

When your Nuns find that you are not governed by any harshness of temper, but by a dread of failing in your duty to God, they will hearken to you with respect, or will be of the number of the foolish Virgins who have neither oil nor light in their lamps.

lamps to go and meet the bridegroom. This would be the most affecting misfortune that could happen; and then, when you have exhausted every resource which prudence and charity dictate, you must employ the lawful authority of a Superior to reform them.

But, my reverend Mother, I presume that you will not have occasion to come to this extremity. They will murmur against you for some time, but the anger of Nuns passeth like a shower, provided there be no cabals nor parties; but then God only can dispel them.

It is difficult to resist a Superior, who prays, begs and humbles herself; who employs tears, rather than reproaches, to affect and persuade. Ah! I wish to God that this was the ordinary language of all Abbesses! But alas! there are too many, who, intoxicated with chimerical rank, without merit, but having a great deal of caprice and haughtiness, live apart from their Nuns, and pass much of their time at their toilets, and in the parlour. These are foolish Virgins (yet perhaps they do not deserve that

that name), who are the ruin and scandal of Communities, and abide in them only like wasps in a hive, to devour the honey and to breed confusion.

In asking my advice, Madam, you have imposed upon me a severe task, for I have no talent for directing, Nuns especially. I think like our Father St. Francis, pardon my sincerity, who said, *that God has debarred us from having wives, that we may be inspired with a desire of being religious; but I am afraid the Devil has given us Sisters to torment us.* He knew how difficult it is to direct Nuns, although there are some among them exceedingly docile, and of excellent understandings;—there is not even a single Community in which there are not some worthy of the highest encomiums.

After all this, Madam, I must beg of you not to address me again upon this subject; and the rather, because I have not time to answer you, and that I can say nothing better than what your Rules tell you. Talk but little with your Directors, and a great deal with God, and peace will flourish



flourish again in your Abbey. I wish it on your own account, and for the honour of religion, being with all possible respect, &c.

ROME, 10 Nov. 1750.

## L E T T E R XXIX.

TO THE ABBE LAMI, PERIODICAL WRITER,  
AT FLORENCE.

**I** Always read your writings with pleasure, my dear Abbé, but I wish you would always give the reasons of your censures. Instead of saying, for example, *that the style of such a work is incorrect; that there are trifles which disfigure the beauty of the book*; you should plainly shew it. Rules have always need of examples.

How would you have an author correct himself, and the Public adopt your manner of judging, if you only censure vaguely, and do not point out the place where the writer has forgot himself?

There is hardly any book of which it may  
not

not be said, that it contains some careless or affected expressions. When you speak in general, it gives room to believe that you have only glanced your eye over the work of which you are giving an account, and that you are in haste to get rid of the trouble.

Another omission is, your not shewing the best parts of the work. The good taste of the Journalist (Reviewer) requires that he should be attentive to this. If a work is not worth the trouble of reading, it is better not to announce it at all, than to rail at the Writer. It is illiberal to abuse a work merely to make the Public merry at the expence of the Author.

It were to be wished that Rome would adopt the practice of Paris, and that we should have several periodical sheets appear successively. We have only a miserable *Diario* (Journal), which contains nothing but insipid stuff, without the least instruction. The duty of an enlightened Reviewer is both necessary and honourable, in a country where letters are cultivated. Nobody knows better than I do what a country owes to a Writer who ties himself down

to

to give an analysis of the books that are printed, every week, or every month, to make known the genius of the nation. It is the least expensive, and the most compendious method of extending knowledge, and of teaching to judge soundly.

I should have no idea of the state of literature in France, if it were not for the French Journals, which my friends are so obliging as to send me. When they are severe without satire, exact without trifling, just and never partial, they discharge their duty to the satisfaction of the Public. Mine is compleat, every time that I can renew to you the sentiments of esteem and affection with which

I am, &c.

ROME, 2d March, 1750.

L E T-

## L E T T E R   X X X .

T O   C O U N T   \* \* \* .

**I**T is incredible, my dearest friend, how much your three visits have comforted my soul;—the tears you shed in my presence, the confession you made to me, in joining your cheek to mine, while you pressed my hand, and protested that you would never forget the anxiety with which I endeavoured to find you out; the affecting manner in which you promised me to amend your past life, and endeavour seriously to re-enter into favour with God, can never be effaced from my memory nor from my heart. I always said to myself, “He hath had a christian education—he will return to his duty;-----I shall see him again; his wanderings are but a storm, which will disperse.” God be praised, the calm is returned!---It is not to me, but to him alone, that you should be thankful.

Since you wish that I should lay down a plan to guide you, I shall simply trace out such an one as my weak understanding,  
but

but strong friendship inspires :---it shall be short. The Commandments of God, those first and sublime laws, from whence all others are derived, may be reduced to a few words. Precepts that are clear and founded upon reason, as well as happiness, have no need of commentary or dissertation.

Read every morning the parable of the Prodigal Son ;---repeat the Psalm *Miserere*, with an humble and contrite heart ;--That may serve for prayer. Read some religious books in the course of the day, not like a slave to finish his task, but as a child of God who returns to his Father, and hopes every thing from his mercy : and that it may not disgust you, your reading need not be long. Acquire the habit of going to Mass, as often as you can, but never fail on Sundays and Festivals ;—assist there like a suppliant who beggeth pardon, with hopes to obtain it.

Make it a duty to scatter some charities every day into the bosoms of the poor, that you may repair the wrongs you have done them, in squandering on criminal pleasures  
and



and superfluities what was due to them. Renounce those companions who have estranged you from God, from yourself, and from your true friends; and form such new connections as honour, decency, and religion, may avow. It is easy to dismiss debauched associates, without affronting them. Speak openly to them of the plan of life you mean to pursue; propose to them to follow it; talk to them only of regretting the past, and forming good resolutions for the future, and they will soon disappear; or, if they return, it will be a proof that they have altered their conduct; and then, instead of shunning them, receive them with more pleasure than ever.

Walk often, lest retirement should make you grow melancholy; and provide, if possible, some person ripened by experience, or some virtuous young man, for a companion. Walk alone as seldom as can be avoided, and especially in these beginnings, while your resolutions are not well confirmed. It may happen, that by giving way to vague thoughts you may soon grow tired of yourself;

yourself, and again relapse into your former course of life.

Read some agreeable but instructive book to entertain yourself in virtuous cheerfulness. Melancholy is the wreck of young people who are employed about their conversion:—they are always drawing a parallel between the dissipated life they have led, and the serious life which is prescribed them; and they end with returning to their former courses.

Take an exact account of your debts and your income, and by your œconomy you will find wherewithal to pay your creditors. A man is always rich, when he is in the habit of depriving himself of indulgences; as he is always poor while he refuses himself nothing.

You should settle an annuity for life upon the woman you have seduced, that want may not oblige her to continue an irregular life; but upon condition that she goes to a distance from you:—announce your intentions in writing, begging pardon for having seduced her, and conjuring her to forget the crea-

ture, that she may be more attached to her Creator.

When opportunities offer of enjoying a little society, do not refuse them, because you may be properly employed there; and because you will be secured from the raillery of the world, which seeks to ridicule piety.

Dress like the rest of the world, according to your rank of life, without being either too foppish or too negligent. True religion shuns extremes;—it is only when counterfeited, that men affect a slovenly dress, a declining head, an austere countenance, and a whining tone.

Dismiss the servants who were accomplices in your intrigues, and the sharers in your guilt; although, after having exposed them to scandal, it would be proper to set them a good example, yet it is to be dreaded, from their knowing your weakness, that they might lay snares to lead you back into the road to perdition. You are still young enough to secure your heart with proper guards and fences.

You

You should live with your new domestics, whose abilities and fidelity have been properly recommended to you, as a master who knows the duties of humanity; as a Christian who knows that we are all equal in the sight of God, notwithstanding the inequality of conditions;---you will set them none but good examples; watch over their manners, without being either a tyrant or a spy; and attach them to you by your gentleness and by your kindnesses. Nothing can be so flattering as to render those happy who live with us.

I exhort you to visit the Chapel in the inside of the Chartreux, which was built by the order of Cardinal Cibo, whose memory I respect. Rather than mix his ashes with those of his illustrious progenitors, which rest in superb monuments, he would be interred in the midst of his domestics, whose epitaphs he made, contenting himself only with these words, full of humility: *Hic jacet Cibo, vermis immundus* \*.

This tomb is absolutely hidden from the sight of men; but God, to whom

\* Here lies Cibo, an unclean worm.

all things are known, will make it manifest at the last day, which will be a sad reproach to those proud men who are vain even in their coffins.

You must think of taking some charge upon you which will give you employment. We always do amiss when we do nothing. Examine your mind, consult your taste, ask your soul, but, above all, address yourself to God, that you may know what is fit for you, whether civil or military. The life of an Ecclesiastic is by no means proper for you. We ought not to carry into the Sanctuary the remains of a heart stained by a commerce with the world, unless the will of God is manifested in an extraordinary manner; which is very rare, and much more to be admired than imitated.

Your friends will think next of marrying you, and it is my advice not to defer it too long. Marriage, when made with purity of heart, preserves young people from a multitude of hazards; but do not reckon upon my choosing a wife for you. From the moment I embraced my profession,



sion, I promised to God that I would never meddle in marriages or testaments. A Monk is a man buried, who ought not to shew any signs of life but for things purely spiritual, because the soul never dies.

Your relation, with whom I have happily reconciled you, is a man of sense, honesty, and integrity, and in a situation to marry you properly. Religion and reason ought to be consulted more than inclination, in an establishment that is to last for life. We rarely see marriages happy, which have no other motive than love. That passion does wonders in poetry and romance, but in real life produces no good effect.

I do not speak to you of your expences, nor of your table. With such principles as I lay down, they must be moderate. Invite frequently some virtuous friend to dinner. I do not like to see you alone, and I recommend to you to be so as little as possible, except when you are at your prayers or reading;—*it is not good for man to be alone*, saith the Scripture.

Do not go to your estate but now-and-then. If you take up your residence in the country at this time, you will bury your good resolutions, as well as your education. Rural societies lead only to dissipation; and however little they are frequented, the effect is, that you forget what you knew, and become rustic, illiterate, and clownish. Hunting, love, and wine, too often become the pastimes of men who live constantly in the country. Towns polish the manners, adorn the mind, and prevent the soul from gathering rust. Do not be scrupulously exact about the hour of rising or going to bed. Order is necessary in all ranks, but constraint and formality too often produce narrow-mindedness.

If you look upon religion in the great, as it ought to be viewed, you will not find in it the puerilities of trifling devotion. Never open those mystical or apocryphal books which, under pretence of nourishing piety, amuse the soul with insignificant ceremonies, leaving the mind without light, and the heart without compunction. *True Devotion*, written by the celebrated Muratori,

tori, will preserve you from all the dangers of a mistaken credulity. I advise you to read that work again and again; and you will profit by it.

Do not receive indiscriminate counsels; for in the diseases of the soul, as in those of the body, every one offers his advice. Avoid the hypocrite as well as the dissipated; both the one and the other will hinder you from arriving at the point we propose. I will not look upon you as a convert, till you have been a long time proved. It is not easy to pass from libertinism to the practice of virtue:—it is for that reason that I recommend, for your Director, the good Franciscan, who was your Father's friend, and is mine. He is an excellent guide in spirituals; and if he keeps you some time before you are admitted to the participation of the holy mysteries, it is because he would be assured, with reason, that you are changed, and follow the constant practice of the Church. Do not be afraid of his severity;—he will join the tenderness of a father to the steadiness of a wise director:—he

F 4

will

will not oppress you with attentions to externals, as less knowing Confessors generally do. If you have sinned thro' pride, he will point out to you the means of humbling yourself:---if through sensuality, he will prescribe remedies to mortify you; thinking, with reason, that the wounds of the soul are not to be healed by repeating prayers in haste, but by labouring to reform the heart. The generality of Sinners, for want of this method, pass their lives in offending God, and then confessing.

Above all things, let there be no excess in your piety; take no violent courses; they will be the means of your relapsing.

Behold, my dear son, my dearest friend, what I thought my duty to sketch out for you. I could not use more tenderness, if you were my own. You will make me die with grief, if the resolutions you so lately entered into, in my presence, should vanish. What encourages me is, that you are a man of truth, that you love me, and are fully convinced that I sincerely wish you well; and in the last place, that you have found

found a disorderly life to be an assemblage of vexation, torment, and remorse.

Hearken to the voice of a Father crying to you from the bottom of the tomb, that there is no happiness in this world but for the friends of God, and charging you to keep the promise you formerly made to him, of living, with the help of heaven, the life of a good Christian.

I am a great deal more attached to you than to myself.

CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,

20 Nov. 1750.

*P. S.* I shall certainly reconcile you to all your family, except perhaps the Marchioness of R\*\*\*, who is too much a devotee ever to pardon you. I expect you to drink chocolate on Saturday, and to communicate a letter to you from poor Sardi, an old servant of your mother, who is really in want. You do not require much time to come from Viterbo to Rome, especially if you have horses *which can go afoot*.



## LETTER XXXI.

TO PRINCE SAN SEVERO, A NEAPOLITAN.

MY LORD,

**I** BEG to present my most humble thanks to you for the great civilities you shewed M. Wessler upon the recommendation of so inconsiderable a man as myself, who do not rank either with the great or the learned. He is exceedingly vain of so flattering a reception. He talks with enthusiasm of all that you have thought of for promoting natural philosophy, and the honour of Philosophers. There are always new discoveries to be made equally useful and curious.

Naples is the most proper town in the world to exercise the genius of the learned. It presents on all hands phenomena of every kind, which engage the attention. Its mountains, its caverns, its stones, its waters, and, if we may use the expression, the fire with which it is penetrated, are so many objects to be examined.

I am

I am not at all surpris'd, that the King himself is flattered with your labours and your success. Every Monarch who knows his own glory, knows how much the credit of the learned is reflected back upon him, when he protects them. If those Geniuses who are capable of great things were encouraged among us, Italy would see great men of every kind spring up from her bosom once more. The seeds of talents still remain;---they want only to be cherished, to flourish with magnificence.

But the Artists now begin to lose that creative genius which worked wonders. Their best pictures and best statues are only like copies: we may say, that they force the pencil to work in spite of itself. There is a hardness in the drawing, instead of that sweet softness which is admired in our first Painters; and we absolutely want that expression which is the soul of painting.

We are more rich in Writers. We have still some, who for energy of style, and beauty of images, may be placed by the

side of the Ancients; such as the Abbé. *Buona-Fede*, of the Order of Celestines.

This is an obligation which we owe to our language. By its charms it engages us to the culture of letters, as you by your talents engage all the world to tell you, that there is nothing more flattering than to be able to assure you of the respect and admiration with which, &c.

ROME, 17 January, 1750.

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## LETTER XXXII.

TO ONE OF HIS FRIENDS, A FRIAR, APPOINTED  
PROVINCIAL.

**D**IGNITIES affect me so little, that I have not courage to pay my compliments to those who are invested with them. It is an additional servitude which must be added to human misery, and the more to be dreaded, as it exposes us to pride. Man is so wretchedly silly as to deck himself with trifling honours, which are mere outside show, and forget an immortal soul to feed upon chimerical prerogatives, which

which last only a few days. Even in the Cloister, where all ought to be disinterestedness, self-denial, and humility, we are as vain of some preferments, as if we had the command of kingdoms.

I make these reflections the more willingly to you, because your turn of mind sets you above all honours, and you have only acquired authority to confer happiness. I am convinced that you will perfectly temper severity with gentleness; that a cloud will never be seen on your countenance, nor unevenness in your temper; that you will always be a brother to those over whom you are become Superior; that you will endeavour to prefer them according to their inclination and abilities; and that you will employ no spies, except to discover the merit of those who are too modest to let it appear.

Thus you will do yourself honour by the manner in which you will discharge your duty, and every one must desire to see and detain you; while there are some Provincials whose visits are dreaded like a tempest. Above all things, take care, my  
 dear

dear friend, of the old men and the young people, that the former may be supported, and the latter encouraged, as they ought to be. These are extremes which appear very distant, yet approach very near, since every young man grows older every instant. Observe moderation in all your proceedings, and think it much better to yield to an excess of mildness, than to give way to too great severity.

Speak nobly of Religion, but let it be well-timed; for people avoid those who are perpetually preaching. Jesus Christ did not make long discourses to his disciples, but what he said to them *is the spirit and the life*. Words have most force, when they are short and pointed. Let there be no affectation in your manner; there are people who imagine that every thing ought to be formal about those in power; but these are little minds.

I will not mention duplicity, unfortunately too much practised by the Heads of religious houses. I flatter myself, from the good opinion I have of your merit, that you will not prefer a complaint against any  
one,



one, without having several times warned him of your intention, or without previously acquainting him. Be afraid of finding any guilty, and when you meet such, humble yourself by this reflection, that man of himself is incapable of doing any good. Be communicative, for we lose much of the good-will of those we govern, by disgusting coldness. In a word, be yourself what you wished a Provincial to be, when you was an Inferior. But we too often exact from others, what we ourselves are not inclined to give. Distinguish the faults by the motives and circumstances; and know, that though there are some which ought to be punished, there are others which ought not to be seen, because every man has his imperfections.

Have few confidants; but when you make any, let it not be by halves; for they will divine the rest, and are not obliged to be secret. Be sure to have no predilection in favour of one rather than another, except on account of superior merit. You are then authorised by the example of Christ himself, who testified a particular

particular affection for St. Peter and St. John.

Finally, pass into the Houses like a beneficent dew, so that they shall regret the time when you leave your office, and say of you, *Transiit benefaciendo* †.

Love me as I love you, and look upon this letter as the transcript of my heart.

My compliments to our common friends, especially our respectable old man, whose good advice has been most useful to me, and to whom my gratitude is immortal.

ROME, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. 1751.

## L E T T E R XXXIII.

TO MADAM THE MARCHIONESS R\*\*\*.

MADAM,

**I**T is undoubtedly very distressing to your dear relation M. the Count, that you will not be reconciled to him, notwithstanding his visit, and the humble and affecting letter he has written to you.

† He scattered blessings as he passed

Is it thus God Almighty deals with *us*? What will the world think of your piety, when they see you so exasperated as to reject the prodigal son? For my part, Madam, who have not your virtue, I flew to him as soon as I knew that he was gone astray, and I hope that God will reward me for it.

You are always repeating, Madam, that he has lost a great deal of money, and that he is a bad man. But what is even the loss of gold, that you should so much regret it? You ought only to be grieved at the abuse of so many good qualities as he possesses; and think, if he is really a bad man, that he has more need than ever of advice, and the example of the truly good.

It is having a very bad idea of religion, to forsake a young man because he has gone astray.

Ah! how do you know, Madam, that this bad man will not next day be acceptable in the sight of God, while your services may by no means please him? For truly one grain of pride is sufficient to spoil the best actions. The Pharisee  
who

who fasted two days in the week was rejected; and the Publican who humbled himself was justified.

Charity, with regard to all men, is always charity; this I shall never cease to repeat, as perfectly agreeable to the morals taught in every Christian school, and from all pulpits.

If the mercy of God depended upon certain devotees, sinners would be much to be pitied: — false devotion knows nothing but an exterminating zeal; while God, full of patience, gentleness, and forbearance, waits the amendment of all those who have gone astray.

Even the blood of Christ implores your forgiveness; and it is not having a proper respect for him, to refuse your dear relation admittance into your house. How do you know, Madam, but that his salvation depended upon those very faults of which he now repenteth? God frequently permits great disorders, to awaken men out of a lethargy. You are not ignorant that there is more joy in Heaven over *one sinner that repenteth*, than over ninety and  
nine.

*nine just persons that need no repentance.* Besides, will you continue your resentment while the angels rejoice? That would be a shocking sort of piety, indeed!

I tremble for every devotée who behaves with such rigidity; for God Almighty himself assures us, that he will treat us as we have treated others. Be so good as to read the Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon, on the subject of Onesimus, and there you will know, Madam, whether you ought to pardon.

It is not for us to decide, whether the heart of a man who appears to have entered seriously into himself is truly changed. Besides, as God alone can know the truth, we ought to presume that he has reformed. Would you think it very just in your neighbours, who are the witnesses of your good works, if they supposed that you acted only from pride? Let us leave to the Searcher of all hearts to pronounce what are the motives of our actions.—The brother of the prodigal son is condemned in the eyes of religion



gion and humanity, for not being properly affected at his return.

If I was your Ghostly Father, although the direction of consciences is neither analogous to my labours nor inclination, in order to appease your anger, I would enjoin you to write to him who is so hateful in your sight — to see him often, and even on the condition of forgetting what is past.

If our piety is to be regulated by whim, virtue is only a phantom; and I certainly presume, that yours has charity for its foundation, for I never judge unfavourably of my neighbour.

If my letter, contrary to my intention, appears a little severe, I beg you will think I speak in such a manner, less on your relation's account, than your own; for your salvation depends upon it. Will you not pardon him, when you have reason to presume that God Almighty hath pardoned him? I cannot think it.

I have the honour to be, with respect, &c.

ROME, 5th Feb. 1751.

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## L E T T E R XXXIV.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CABANE.

S I R,

**Y**OU persevere, then, in your intention of burying yourself at La Trappe, and to put it out of my power to address you in future, but by writing your epitaph? Since it is your determination, I will not persist in opposing you, because you have been long tried, and are not of an age to take any inconsiderate step.

The world will laugh at you, but pray what do they not laugh at? I know no person, no work, no proceeding of any kind, nor even a virtue, without its censurers. This should be a consolation to the religious Orders for the hatred the world bears them, and the contempt with which they are spoken of.

Too great encomiums were made upon the religious Orders when they were first instituted, and some counterpoise was necessary

cessary to preserve their humility. The Founders had the best intentions in forming the different institutions in the bosom of the Church ; and even the habits which they gave their Disciples, though reckoned by the world fantastical, prove their wisdom and their piety. They thought these habits a means of preventing the Religious from mixing with the Seculars, and of excluding them from profane assemblies. It was natural for men who embraced a kind of life quite different from the customs of the world, to wear particular habits.

Thus, then, they are justified upon that head. Ah ! how easy would it be to apologize for the rest, if I was not of the profession myself ! Read their rules, examine their customs, and it is impossible not to acknowledge, that all which is recommended, and all that is observed in the Cloisters, leads to God.

If they have degenerated since their first institution, it is because man is naturally weak, and at the end of a certain time the greatest fervour must relax. But nothing  
scandalous

scandalous ever became a rule among the religious Orders; there are some in every house who declare against all kinds of irregularities and excesses,

They who rail continually against the Monks, who wish to take their possessions from them, and to banish them from every State, are certainly ignorant of their being called into the different Kingdoms by the Kings themselves, who endowed them, and loaded them with benefactions. They must be ignorant, that if the foundations of Kings are not sacred, there is no longer any thing in the world that should be spared; and that, in short, the Monks, whom they so inveigh against, have gained by the sweat of their brows, by their watchings, and by their labours, the bread which nourisheth them.

Their pretended rapaciousness is only calumny. The Benedictines acquired their property by cultivating the country and the Lord's vineyard, at a time when ignorance and corruption made the greatest devastation. The first disciples of St. Dominick,

minick, of St. Francis d'Assise, and St. Francis de Paul, asked nothing from Kings, while they had their most perfect confidence, and could obtain every thing; as may be proved by their indigence.

I know there are Monasteries which by their misconduct have often made a reformation necessary; but neither the Monastic rules nor the Founders deserve to be blamed. A man who lives in a Cloister according to their rules, cannot but excite the esteem and deserve the attachment of all good men. For what is a true Monk but a Citizen of Heaven, who values not this world, who makes a sacrifice of his will and his senses to God himself, in the person of his Superior, and who continually wisheth for the coming of the Lord;—who instructs and edifies for the good of his neighbour;—who shews in a chearful countenance the joys of a good conscience, and the charms of virtue;—who prays, who labours, who studies for himself, and for his brethren;—who lays himself at the feet of the whole world by his humility, but is exalted above all men  
by



by the sublimity of his hopes and his desires;—who possesseth nothing but a soul in peace;—who wisheth for nothing but heaven;—who liveth only to die, and dieth to live again to all eternity?

Behold what you are to be, my dearest Sir, the rules of your Order excepted, since by the observance of them you will have no further commerce with mankind. That is the only thing which gives me pain, because I love that we should be useful to our neighbour.

Time, which is an oppressive load to the generality of men, will be no burden to you. Every minute will seem a step towards Heaven; and night itself will be to you as light as day, from the commerce you will hold with God. *Et nox sicut dies illuminabitur.*

You will not hear the bell which calls you to service, only as a bell, but as the voice of God;—you will not obey the Abbé simply as a man, but as one who holds the place of Jesus Christ, and who will speak to you in his name;---you will not look upon penance as a slavery which

must not be dispensed with, but as a holy pleasure which will be your delight.

You will omit none of the smallest rules which subdue the spirit, and oppose the will; for a Monk cannot preserve the fervour of devotion, but by practising exactly whatever is recommended: thus you will preserve the liberty of the children of God, by doing voluntarily and with pleasure whatever may be required from you as a duty of obligation.

I shall be happy to see you according to your promise, having no greater satisfaction than to find myself with the true servants of God, especially as in these days they are extremely rare.

I can add nothing, but that I am, &c.

ROME, 15th March, 1751.

## L E T T E R XXXV.

TO THE BISHOP OF SPOLETTA.

MY LORD,

**W**HAT your Lordship wrote to me on the subject of the relics of Saints, does honour to your discernment and to your religion. There are two rocks to be shunned by all true Catholics ;—that of believing too much, and that of not believing enough. If we were to give credit to all the stories told of the relics which are shewn in every country, we must frequently suppose that a Saint had ten heads, or ten arms.

This abuse, which has procured us the name of superstitious, has happily only taken root among the ignorant. Thank Heaven, it is well known in Italy, (and the Clergy repeat it often enough) that there is nothing absolutely necessary but the mediation of Jesus Christ; and that of the Saints, as the Council of Trent hath formally declared, is only *good and useful*.

The relics of the Blessed deserve all our veneration, as precious remains which will one day be gloriously revived ; but while we honour them, we acknowledge that they have no virtue in themselves, and that it is Jesus Christ, of whom they are in some sort fragments, and the Holy Ghost, of whom they are the true temples, who communicate to them a heavenly impression capable of working great wonders.

Notwithstanding this, the attention to the worship due to God is but too often taken off by that which is paid to Saints. Hence that wise order was given in Rome, never to place relics upon the altar where the *venerabile* (the holy sacrament) is deposited, lest they should divide the attention of the people.

Our religion, which is so spiritual and sublime, is unjustly accused of countenancing abuses of which there is not the least vestige to be found in the Cathedrals, or old Monasteries.

If men will condescend to hearken to the ignorant, who do not seek instruction, there is not a statue but has spoken, nor  
a Saint

a Saint who has not risen from the dead, nor a dead person whose apparition has not been seen ; but the enemies of the Catholic religion falsely impute to the Church of Rome the apocryphal facts to which superstition daily gives vent. It is useless to preach to the people on that subject ; ---- they do not easily recover from their obstinacy, when they persuade themselves of something contrary to the doctrines of the whole Church.

I lately obliged an Englishman to allow, that the Protestants make it their business to charge us constantly with absurdities which we reject, and that they have a very unfair method of judging us.

Italy always had shining Pastors, who lamented the credulity of weak minds, and the incredulity of Free-thinkers. It is not from the credulity of the common people that a sensible man would judge of the faith of a country ; but from the tenets which are taught in their catechisms, or in their public instructions.

It would be very extraordinary, if Rome, the sovereign and mother of all the



churches---that Rome, the centre of truth and unity, should teach absurdities. My Lord, she is justly vindicated in the work you sent me. I advise you to publish it, to stop the mouths of the enemies of the Holy See; and to inform the whole world, that if there are perhaps more superstitions in Italy than elsewhere, it is because the people have a more lively imagination, and consequently are more ready to catch without reflection at every thing that is presented to their minds. Take care of your health, notwithstanding the zeal which consumes you, and deign to believe me to be, with infinite respect,

My Lord, &c.

ROME, 17th May, 1751.

LET-

## L E T T E R XXXVI.

TO CARDINAL QUIRINI.

MOST EMINENT,

**T**HE work I have been reading by your order, is one of the productions of this age, where there are more paradoxes than reasonings, more objections than solutions, more raillery than proof, more heat than light, more surface than depth. Superficial readers will praise it highly, but men of sense will think of it contemptibly; yet as they make the smallest number, it is a book which will gain reputation, and make a noise.

Few people know how to value a work. If they are pleased with the style, they give their suffrage in its favour, and admire in extasy, without reflecting that the colouring is the least merit of a picture.

It must be allowed, my Lord, that we live in a whimsical age. There never was less religion, but it was never more the subject of conversation;—there never

was more wit, nor was ever wit more abused. Men would know every thing, yet study nothing; they decide upon every thing, but sift nothing to the bottom.

It is not to recriminate, that I cry out against the age. They may abuse Priests, and welcome,—'Tis only for their abuse of religion that I reproach them. They may have reason when they complain of our too great numbers, as well as of our taking the vows at too early an age in a profession that is to last for life: nevertheless it is necessary to engage early, without which we cannot enter into the spirit of any profession.

If many of our Pastors would fairly examine themselves, they would admit, that by their haughtiness and dissipation they have given room for murmurings and complaints. Wherefore dissemble what all the world knows? But it is unjust to make a whole fraternity answerable for every one of its individuals, and to consider the fault of one man as the fault of the whole. The sin of a brother is not like original sin, common to all.

You

You see, my Lord, that I take ample advantage of the liberty your Eminency hath allowed me, to let my pen run on various subjects, when I have the inestimable happiness of writing to you. You know, that being of the Order of St. Benedict, we have not always leisure to keep one object in view. It is only the attachment and respect due to you which we never lose sight of, and it is with that double sentiment that I am

Your Eminency's, &c.

ROME, 3d July, 1751.

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## L E T T E R XXXVII.

TO THE REV. FATHER SIGISMOND, OF FERRARA, GENERAL OF THE CAPUCHINS.

MOST REV. FATHER,

**I** AM extremely thankful that your apostolical progress has not hindered you from remembering me. I wish I could have accompanied you, as I am convinced that on such a journey I should have received

both instruction and edification. I should have admired with you, how much the family of our holy Founder is increased, and with what richness the virtues are perpetuated in your Order.

There is not a good which the Capuchin Fathers have not done, and there is not an evil with which they can be reproached. The alms given them are a salary justly due; for they labour with indefatigable zeal both in town and country for the support of Religion, and propagation of the Faith. The four quarters of the world have Capuchins; they are protected even by the most barbarous princes, and are beloved by all nations.

I executed the commission you charged me with, at the proper time. I had promised, and my promises are inviolable; as I consider such obligations to be a duty both of religion and morality.

Your garden, my most reverend Father, is always one of my favourite walks. I prefer it to the most magnificent parks: it seems to breathe an air uninfected by the depravity of the times.

I have



I have the honour to be, my most Rev. Father, with all possible veneration, &c.

CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,

7 August, 1751.

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L E T T E R XXXVIII.

TO MADAM B\*\*\*, A VENETIAN.

MADAM,

**Y**OU do me too much honour in asking my opinion of your admirable translation of Locke. Is it possible, that in a town plunged as deep in pleasures as it is in water, a person of your rank should apply herself to the depths of Metaphysics? It is an eminent proof, that our soul disengages itself from the senses, when it would shake off matter; and, consequently, must be incorporeal.

I have read over and over again, with the strictest attention, the inestimable manuscript where you have so nobly displayed

the beauties of our language, and with so much elegance have changed the parched field of Philosophy into an agreeable parterre. The English Philosopher would be vain, if he could see himself dress'd in such elegant Italian.

I wish, if it had been possible, that your Ladyship had suppressed that part of the work where Locke hints that matter may have a power of thinking. It is not like the reflection of a Philosopher who has thought deeply. The faculty of thinking cannot be exercised but by a Being necessarily endowed with spiritual and intellectual powers. Matter can never have the privilege of thinking, any more than darkness can have the power of giving light; both the one and the other imply a contradiction; but men rather chuse to *speake absurdly*, than not to say *uncommon things*.

I congratulate my country more than ever, on its having a continued succession of learned women in it. It would be very proper to make a collection of those works which display their singular abilities.

ties. The translation of Locke will hold one of the first places; especially as you have found the secret of employing the poetic style frequently to smoothe the wrinkles of philosophy, which contracts the brow, and whose expression is necessarily hard and dry.

I entreat you, Madam, to print this work, if it be only to convince Foreigners, that science is still honoured with us, and that your sex is not so trifling as they are pleased to imagine.

How could you single me out in that croud, where my small share of merit has placed me? There are a number of Academicians, especially at Bologna, whose judgement would have been more to be depended on than mine. One is not a Philosopher for having made profession of it, and especially that of *Scotus*, whose captious subtilty is nothing but a continual wrangling.

There is more substance in one page of our Metaphysicians of the last age, than in all the books of Aristotle and Scotus. The same, however, cannot be said of  
Plato;

Plato; who in these days would have been an excellent philosopher, and probably a true Christian.

I find him full of matter and great views. His researches, without being obscured by the clouds which surrounded the Ancients, extended to the Deity himself.

I could have wished, Madam, that there had not been that playing upon words, in the last leaves of your translation, which disgraces it. That which is of itself majestic, has no occasion for trivial decorations. Cicero would not be what he is, had he written like Seneca. Pardon my freedom, but you love truth; and that quality is greater in my eyes, than all those which adorn you.

You will work a great miracle, if you excite a relish for philosophy at Venice. It is a country where there is a great share of genius even among the mechanics; but pleasure is there, a fifth element, which is a bar to emulation; the people sacrifice their time and rest to it, except the order of Senators, who are so much employed, that they may be called the slaves of the nation.

tion. The people are always in gaiety, even while they are at work. But I perceive that I am insensibly speaking of government, and that my letter will very soon become guilty of *leze-serenité*, or *high-treason*, against the State. I know, that the Most Serene Republic is very scrupulous about what relates to their usages and customs, as well as to their laws.

I will confine myself, therefore, Madam, to telling you what will admit of no contradiction, and be quite conformable to the sentiments of the whole Senate; which is, that they cannot sufficiently assure you of the respect due to your genius, your birth, or your virtue, and with which I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 10 January, 1753.



## L E T T E R XXXIX.

TO R. P. LOUIS, OF CREMONA, DIRECTOR  
OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS.

MY REVEREND FATHER,

**T**O model your preaching after Bourdaloue, is to run the race of immortality. We have occasion for an Orator of your abilities and courage, to reform the style of our pulpits. In our sermons, we are rather Poets than Orators; and unfortunately have very frequently more of the *Pantomime* than the pathetic; while the word of God requires the noblest eloquence, and the greatest circumspection.

I am charmed with the manner in which you have translated some volumes of Bourdaloue. I do not doubt but our Most Holy Father will applaud your work with transport; for I know how much he wishes for a reformation in our Sermons. He does not require that Italian eloquence should become French;—every language has its turns and expressions; but he wishes that they would speak the language  
of

of christians, which ought to be evangelical, and which should never be disfigured by burlesque.

The mouth of the preacher is truly the mouth of God. Alas! then, what should be thought of him who can utter buffooneries and trifles from the pulpit!

Whoever does not find in the Holy Scriptures and the works of the Fathers wherewithal to affect his hearers, is not worthy of mounting the pulpit. There cannot be finer images of the greatness and mercy of God, than in the Psalms and spiritual Songs :--there cannot be more affecting histories than those of Joseph, of Moses, and of the Maccabees :--there cannot be more striking examples of the divine justice, than the punishment of Nadab and Abihu, or of Belshazzar, who saw a dreadful hand writing in tremendous characters his condemnation on the wall.

In all the books of the world you cannot find such strains of eloquence as the reflections of Job: all attempts to paraphrase only enervate them. Delightful dis-

discourses may be composed by selecting some of the most beautiful passages in Scripture, and adapting them to the subject. St. Paul, the most pathetic and sublime of all Preachers, employed only the language of the Scriptures in his Epistles---and they are admirable.

We should burn the greatest part of our sermons, to prevent the taste of our young Preachers from being corrupted. There they search for apocryphal facts, Pagan citations, and thence form to themselves a style truly ridiculous. Sentiments of compunction or terror, which are produced by the exclamations, grimace, and gestures of the Preacher, make but momentary impressions. They are strokes of thunder, which astonish, and may occasion the audience to make the sign of the † Cross, but do not prevent their laughing the instant after.

If your method, most Rev. Father, can be introduced among us, you will be the restorer of christian eloquence, and all who feel it will bless you.

† The people in Italy make the sign of the Cross when they hear thunder.

I had.

I had for ghostly Father a Monk who was filled with the spirit of God, and who was grieved every time he heard some preachers: but when he himself preached, it was his heart which spoke, and consequently his hearers were deeply affected.

I shall see you with great pleasure, when you honour me with a visit; I shall have nothing to do then but to listen.

I endeavour in the midst of my daily occupations to have always some moments for myself and for my friends. The soul has need of some respite, that it may the better pursue its labours. The sciences are mountains, which we cannot climb without taking breath.

Take care of yourself, but less upon your own account than ours, who wish to read, hear, and admire you. It is with that desire so conformable to religion and the wishes of my country, that I have the honour to be in the fullness of my heart,

Your most humble, &c.

CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,

1st March, 1753.

P. S.

P. S. As to a reform in the Breviary, which you mentioned to me, I wish our holy Father would think seriously of it. However, I am not of your opinion as to the distribution of the Psalms. I should think it proper, if I was consulted, to leave the *Beati immaculati in viâ*, to be repeated daily. It is a continual protestation of an inviolable attachment to the law of God, and which is better in the mouths of the ministers of God, than some obscure enigmatical Psalms, which are often unintelligible to the generality of Priests.

I would likewise leave the Prayer Book as it is. You will tell me that any set form of words becomes too much a thing of course to preserve its effect; but are we not exposed to the same inconvenience with regard even to the prayers of the Mass, when it is celebrated every day?

The notes you sent me on the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, are admirable.



## L E T T E R XL.

T O C O U N T \* \* \* .

**I** OWE you a Library, my dear friend, but nevertheless you shall pay for it. I promised to give you a list of books which I think necessary for you, and now I must acquit myself of my promise. This list shall be short, because it is not the multitude of books which makes us learned. It is of no consequence to read much; but it is of essential importance to read well.

The first book which I would place at the head of your Library is the *Gospel*, as the most necessary and the most sacred. It is right that the book which contains the principles and basis of religion should be the foundation of your studies.

It is there that you will learn to know what you owe to God, and to the wisdom and goodness of the Mediator in whom we hope, and who hath reconciled heaven and earth by the shedding of his blood.

That

That book has been in your hands almost from your infancy; but as you attended but little to it then, it will now excite new sentiments in your soul. The Gospel, when meditated upon with due respect, appears to be the language of God. You will not find in it that oratorical emphasis which characterises Rhetoricians; the syllogistical arguments which mark the Philosophers;—it is quite simple, all is within the reach of every capacity, and all is divine.

I expressly recommend to you to read St. Paul's Epistles. Beside inspiring you with an aversion against false teachers and false devotees, who under an appearance of sanctity destroy the spirit of it, they will inspire you with universal charity, which takes in all, and which, better than all the Preceptors in the world, makes us good relations, good friends, and good citizens. At the school of the Apostle we learn all the oeconomy of religion; *its length, its depth, its sublimity*; in a word, *the most excellent science of Jesus Christ*, who would be universally adored, if he

was

was more generally known, and by whom the intellectual and material worlds were made.

The Psalter as dictated by the Holy Spirit, a work which warms the soul while it enlightens the mind, and which for the true sublime surpasses all the orators or poets that ever wrote, ought to be your constant Manual.

I would not recommend to you to take too great a portion of these writings, at a time. The holy Scriptures should not be perused but with reflection and reserve; for besides that every text affords matter for ample meditation, the word of God deserves another kind of respect than the words of men.

Take care to procure the *Confessions of St. Augustine*, a book written with his tears; but it is a work better calculated for the heart than the head, and you should attend to it in that light. To this you should join the collection of the select pieces of the Fathers of the Church, so as to know of yourself, that christian eloquence alone can truly elevate the soul, and that it is  
a thou-

a thousand times more sublime than all profane oratory, because it has for its object God himself, the fountain of all greatness.

*The Imitation of Jesus Christ* is a book much too holy and instructive to be left out of your Catalogue. It is an Italian production, notwithstanding what all the writers of Dissertations have said upon this head, (since Gerson, Abbé of Verceil, is the author) in which the soul will find whatever can edify or comfort her. Make frequent use of it, as the work in the world the most fertile in consolations for every situation in life.

Study carefully the *Introduction to the Christian Doctrine*, a work of P. Gerdil, a Barnabite, as it is a book which you cannot read too often; and intermix the History of the Church with that of Empires and Nations, so as not to confuse your mind and ideas. The head should be always clear, when we are to judge with wisdom and precision. When you become better acquainted with the French Language, I advise you to  
read

read Bossuet's Universal History ; and the Thoughts of Paschal on Religious Truths.

The Annals of Italy by the immortal Muratori, the History of Naples by Giannone, the Campaigns of Don Carlos by Buonamici, the periodical publications of the Abbé Lami, not to teach you to decide, but to think rightly, are so many works which you ought to peruse.

I do not mention books of natural history and antiquities, which are subjects no one should be ignorant of.

You must remember, my dear friend, that Cicero, Virgil, and Horace trod the ground which we inhabit ; that they breathed the same air which we breathe ; and that as they are our countrymen, we should read their writings from time to time, more especially, as they are filled with elegant instruction. You have made good proficiency in classical learning, and it will be easy for you occasionally to enjoy their agreeable conversation.

I do not debar you from reading our modern Poets, provided you peruse them with precaution, and do not go to throw



yourself headlong into all their labyrinths, their grottoes, and their groves: these are not proper places for a christian soul. I do not like that you should remain too long with the fabulous Goddesses; these are fictions, which lead too often to realities.

I should be much better pleased to see Pliny's Letters, the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius or of Seneca in your hands; there you will find sentiments of humanity that cannot be too much commended.

Behold, my dear friend, the whole of the Library I would confine you to; because I think we should have books only for use, and not for ostentation. You may add Cardinal Bentivoglio's Letters.

I neither give you legends, nor mysticks. You will find the principal Saints in the History of the Church; and the account which is given of them in apocryphal books, would perhaps only serve to make you doubt of the wonders they really wrought, and lessen the respect which is due to them. Great men should not be

seen but in the great, and truth needs no support to make it respected.

If I have not mentioned books of philosophy to you, it is because I would not send you back to school to adopt systems, and learn to dispute. I am afraid you might pick up some whimsical notion or other; and to speak impartially, I would not have you espouse any one opinion of the Schools.

Philosophy has produced more sophistry than sound reasoning; and it is sufficient that you have a perfect knowledge of the Heavens and the Earth, a clear and precise idea of our duties, our origin and our destiny, to be a true philosopher. In the midst of your exercises and your studies, reflect upon these great objects; and when you have determined upon your profession in life, you will then be informed how to instruct yourself in what relates to it.

Good night! — My pen cannot go farther; my head, fatigued by continual application through the whole day, obliges me to stop here. It is only my heart that

I find always in full vigour, when it is employed in assuring you how much

I am, &c.

ROME, 31st Dec. 1751.

## L E T T E R XLI.

TO CARDINAL PASSIONEI.

MOST EMINENT,

**I**F we could make restitution of our knowledge, as we can of goods we had stolen, your Eminency would see me laying at your feet all the science I am possessed of, as your own property; and then there would be no room to praise me for my pretended knowledge. Almost every Saturday I go to your Eminency's magnificent library, and fill myself as much as I can with whatever excellent things fall in my way. I come there quite indigent, but return excessively rich---so that my reputation and merit are founded upon these secret robberies; and it is to your books, my Lord, not to my own genius, that I am indebted.

I share

I share in the pleasures they taste who hear your Eminency in that delightful hermitage, where Science presides, where Virtue shines, and Friendship holds converse. It is decreed that Brother Ganganelli can only wish for such a gratification, for his employment will never allow him to go and repose himself under the shade of your myrtle and orange-trees. — That would be too sensual for a Monk of St. Francis, who ought to know nothing but mortification and poverty.

What comforts me, my Lord, is, that happily I taste the purest pleasure in fulfilling the task which is set me; and the respects which I should otherwise present to you at Frescati, could neither be more profound nor extensive, than those with which I have the honour to be here, &c.

ROME, 8th May, 1753.

L E T T E R XLII.

T O M. A Y M A L D I.

**T**HE last memorial which you sent me, resembles those uncultivated countries where there are by chance some agreeable spots. I unravelled it with monkish patience, and with the greatest desire to oblige you. There would be too great pleasure in studying, if we were to meet with nothing but flowers. Every man who is employed in his closet should look upon himself as a traveller, who sometimes meets with flowery paths, and sometimes with rugged roads.

That light production of P. Nocetti the Jesuit, upon the *Iris*, has a great deal of delicacy in it. You find there that brilliant and poetic imagination which embellishes the thoughts and the style. The Jesuits have always cultivated the Belles-lettres with success. These kinds of writing are like vivifying waters to me; they recal my vital spirits when I find myself



self exhausted with painful studies:—I smell to them, and recover my strength. You know that Science is the grave of the Belles-lettres, if we do not spare them a few hours, now-and-then, to prevent our forgetting them. My Professor of Theology said to me, once, “I am so absorbed  
“in abstruse studies, that my mind loses  
“the relish for more polite performances.”  
—Taste itself becomes blunted, if we give it nothing to relish.

I shall see the R. P. General of the Dominicans (P. Bremond) on the subject of your affair, and I believe I shall succeed. Besides his being very obliging in his own nature, he has great good-will towards me; and I shall likewise remind him, that St. Francis and St. Dominick being good friends, and also St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas, it is proper that the same happy harmony should subsist among their Disciples.

Adieu! Take care of your health, for we may wager any thing, that during the Pontificate of a learned man your merit must lead to great things. I do not wish

H 4. it

it so much on your account, or my own,  
as for the honour of the Holy See.

I have that of being, &c.

ROME, 12th May, 1753.

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## L E T T E R    XLIII.

TO DOM GAILLARD, PRIOR OF THE CHAR-  
TREUX AT ROME.

MY REV. FATHER,

**S**INCE you have opened your heart  
to me about what passes in your  
Community, I will open mine to you  
with the same candour; and must tell you,  
that it were much to be wished, in an Or-  
der so rigid as yours, that the Superiors  
were more communicative; that they  
should not let a week pass, without visit-  
ing their Monks; that they ought to infi-  
nuate themselves amicably into their  
hearts, and by salutary advice and tender  
encouragement assist them to support the  
yoke of solitude.

The

The kingdom of Christ is not the empire of Despotism. It is both contrary to religion and humanity, to render men slaves. If a person has made a vow to obey his superiors, he has not engaged to respect their caprices.

It is generally imagined, that the office of Superior is a place of authority, which consists in commanding, and seeing the Monks trembling and submissive. But the Chief of a Community is a person who should be *all things to all men*, study their different characters, sound their geniuses, and know what is hurtful to one, what is useful to another, and what every one in particular is capable of.

There are some Monks who have no desire for conversation, because they are naturally of a silent temper ; there are others whom an obstinate silence would render miserable, because they are of a sociable disposition ; and it is in such a situation that a Superior should have different ways of conducting himself, excusing one rather than the other, if they should make some slight infractions of the rules. Every

religious Order ought to have no other temper than that of our Saviour, who was always gentle and of humble heart ; who treated his Disciples as brethren and friends, calling himself their servant, and actually performing the functions of a servant.

Rules would be like a step-mother, if they punished unmercifully those who by too great vivacity, or too great slowness, should become guilty of some omissions. There are Monks whom a Superior should visit more frequently, because they are more frequently tempted, and find it more difficult to endure retirement : so that without a spirit of discernment and penetration, a Superior would be only an image, whose government must be contemptible. There is only one way of directing, and yet there are as many different directions necessary, as there are individuals in the Community. One falls off from his duty, if reprimanded ; while another shall double his diligence, if he finds the slightest lapse animadverted upon.

The Order of the Chartreux deserves all possible respect, as having no occasion  
either

either for change of discipline, or for reformation, during the seven centuries that it hath subsisted; but I confess to you, that the Priors have always appeared to me to have affected too fullen and severe a deportment, and by going singly to the general Chapters, were both judges and party.

As they frequently receive visits, and have the liberty of writing and going abroad themselves, they should not be too strict against a poor Monk for having let a few words escape his lips.

They become Inquisitors in their office, when they would punish every thing, and overlook nothing. There are petty wranglings in Communities as well as in families, which subsist only because their Superiors do not know how to despise them.

Visit your brotherhood in friendship;—do not speak to them of the past, and you will see them ashamed of having caballed. Nothing disarms rage so much as gentleness:—in embracing them with cordiality, you will shew them that you can conquer yourself, and they will be edified. There



is nothing more dangerous for people in office, than never to allow that they have been mistaken.

Accustom yourself to reform the faults of your Monks in your own house, without informing the General of them. Such a conduct irritates those that are accused, and shews a want of the proper talent for governing.

This is my way of thinking. If I am deceived, you will do me a pleasure by proving it:—if your reasons are good, I will submit; for I am neither prejudiced in my own favour, nor obstinate in my opinions. It is my heart only that speaks throughout this letter; and it is that also which assures you of the sincerity of those sentiments with which

I am, &c.

ROME, 21st June, 1754.

## L E T T E R XLIV.

T O T H E S A M E.

**T**HE *siesto*, or afternoon's nap of Italy, my most dear and reverend Father, would not have alarmed you so much, if you had recollected, that when we are at Rome, we should do as the Romans do.---  
*Cum Romano Romanus eris.*

Is it either sin or shame, then, for a poor Monk, in a country where one is oppressed with excessive heat, to indulge in half an hour's repose, that he may afterwards pursue his exercises with the more activity? Consider, that silence is best kept when one is asleep. You who reckon among the capital sins, the pronouncing a single word when your rules forbid the use of speech,--- take the example of Christ when he found his Apostles asleep: *Alas*, says he to them, with the greatest mildness, *could you not watch with me one hour?*

But

But how can you consistently expect from your Monks, the obedience which you refuse to the Sovereign Pontiff? You cannot but know, that all the monastic laws owed their force only to the approbation of the Popes; and if he who reigns at present with so much wisdom, would give your Monks a dispensation from certain customs, it is absolutely in his power. There is no contending with the Legislator the right of modifying the laws.

The softening some austerities which depend upon time, place, and circumstance, does not affect the essence of the vows. *The letter kills, but the spirit brings to life.* But there are some restless Superiors who are afraid lest they should omit a syllable of the constitutions. For God's sake, be calm, both for the good of your Monks and your own health. While you consult me, I must reply in this manner: It is not sufficient to alledge the dictates of conscience, unless it be enlightened. I embrace you with all my heart, being, &c.

ROME, 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. 1754.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XLV.

TO A MONK SETTING OUT FOR AMERICA.

**T**HE seas will very soon separate us ; but such is the lot of this life, that some are scattered to the extremities of the world, while others remain always in the same place. One thing is certain, that my heart follows yours ; — and that wherever yours shall be, there will mine be found also.

If you have not laid in an ample stock of piety, I shall be exceedingly in fear for you, on a passage where all the words you will hear will not be those of edification ; and in a country where all the examples that will be presented to you, will not be found the most correct models of virtue. America is the earthly Paradise where they frequently eat the forbidden fruit. The serpent is continually preaching up the love of riches and pleasures, and the warmth of the climate sets the passions in commotion.

We

We are unfortunate enough in this world not to be able to restrain our passions, when we perceive no other Superior but God, unless a lively faith be the principle of our actions. And such is the case of the religious who live in America. Not having any Superior, who has a right to prescribe rules, or an authority to exact their observance, they are lost, if the Gospel does not reign in their hearts.

I persuade myself, that you will frequently beg of God to give you strength to support you against all kinds of dangers. Much good effect may be produced, even among the Negroes, notwithstanding their being generally addicted to the grossest vices, provided a Pastor can contrive to gain their confidence, and be able to impress their minds with a certain awe.

Think that the God of the universe will be as near you in America, as in Europe; that his eye seeth every where, his justice judgeth all; and that it is for him alone you ought to act. Lead a diligent and regular life; for, unfortunately,  
should



should indolence once get possession of you, the vices will very soon beset you, and you will not be able to defend yourself.

Never suffer one word to pass your lips which can be interpreted against religion or morals. Even those who seemingly applaud, will, in fact, despise you, as an unworthy servant who makes a mock of the master whose bread he eats, and whose livery he wears.

God preserve you from heaping up riches ! A Priest who loves money, but more especially a Monk who has taken the vow of poverty, is worse than the wicked rich man, and deserves to be still more rigorously treated.

Be sociable, and gain your parishioners' affections by much affability : — let them see that it is true piety which governs you, and not fancy.

Do not meddle in secular affairs, except to accommodate law-suits, and restore peace. I will pray for you to Him who commands the waves, who calms the tempests, and who doth not abandon his people wherever found. What comforts me is, that  
souls.

souls know no distance; for by the ties of religion and the heart we are always neighbours to one another.

Adieu, and adieu! I tenderly embrace you.

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## L E T T E R XLVI.

TO THE PRELATE CERATI.

**Y**OU are too happy, my dear Prelate, in dividing your time between Pisa and Florence:—in the one, your mind is at its ease; and in the other, your knowledge finds its proper sustenance.

When I think that Tuscany is truly the restorer of arts and sciences, I greatly revere it, and I feel my heart palpitate every time I hear it mentioned. The advantage of the happiest situation and happiest climate rendered it worthy of this glory; we breathe a sweetness of air there, which seems to give the soul a new being; and it is perceivable at every step, why the Fine Arts

Arts should have chosen that situation for their residence.

I knew an old man who had the most cultivated reason, and the most voluptuous mind, who arranged his time so well, that he passed the spring every year at Pisa, the summer at Sienna, the autumn at Leghorn, and the winter at Florence. He went alternately to these four towns, to study the humour of the inhabitants, to give vent to his own, and to taste the sweets of the most agreeable society. Our conversations begin to degenerate;—they have lost that spirit with which our fathers supported them, and it is to the too agreeable French frivolity, which captivates all minds, that we are indebted for the change.

Every age bears some mark which characterises it; --- luxury, which corrupts our morals, corrupts likewise our discourse and our writings: --- there is scarce any soul in our conversation, in our writings, or our paintings. We possess nothing now but a certain elegance, as superficial as the genius which produces it; and unfortunately even religion partakes of this evil.

They

They think they can take whatever is displeasing from Christianity, as they can retrench the ornaments of drefs.

You are fenfible of thefe evils ; --- you lament, and you have reafon.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 2d Sept. 1754.

## L E T T E R XLVII.

TO THE ABBE CANILLAC AUDITOR OF ROTA.

**I** CALLED upon you, my Lord, that I might have the honour of delivering with my own hand a volume of Monf. Buffon—an excellent book ; an excellent writer, if he was not too fyftematical : there is an energy of ftyle and thoughts which transports and aftonifhes. To ask my opinion of the liberties of the Gallican Church, is to put it out of my power to fpeak. Befides, what fignifies that queftion, if the French, like the Romans, are Catholics, notwithstanding the fentiments which divide them upon this article ? The Popes and the Kings in times  
 paft

past were reciprocally wrong, and Benedict XIV. is happily the most proper Pontiff to make their errors be forever forgotten.

What you have deigned to recommend to me shall be done as soon as possible, with a zeal equal to the respect with which I am, &c.

ROME, 6th June, 1754.

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## L E T T E R XLVIII.

TO THE MARQUIS SCIPIO MAFFEI.

**T**HE young Monk whom you recommended to me, is quite vain of such an honour, and I am no less so of your excellent letter: I shall preserve it as a talisman to communicate to me some sparks of your learning and genius. I would say a thousand things, but am afraid of you as of a spirit, and find myself interdicted. I recollect the immensity of your knowledge, and the merit of your productions; and that remembrance renders me so little in my own eyes, that I cannot appear before you.

Italy



Italy will long be vain of having given you birth; and if Verona knew its glory, it would erect statues to you; but what renders you superior to such vain honours, is, that you are the humblest of men, and know less than any man your own worth.

I would not pardon Time, who, without respect to merit, brings on old age, if I was not persuaded with you, that a heavenly life awaits us. We know that Heaven is the centre and habitation of all light, and that the knowledge which is acquired there in a moment, exceeds beyond the reach of comparison the feeble glimmerings which we enjoy here below.

I shall pay all possible attention to your recommendation. He shall become my son, as he has been yours, by the interest I shall have in his improvement, both in the sciences and in piety. He will find in our Order the same assistance which I found there, to instruct and form me; and I can say, upon this occasion, without flattering my brethren, that he could not be better situated for those purposes. They have a  
taste

taste for good authors; they encourage emulation; they give constant application, and they esteem, in a most particular manner, the incomparable Scipio Maffei. He lives in our hearts as he does in his own writings; and this I can certainly assure him of, being more than any one, &c.

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## L E T T E R XLIX.

TO MONS. CARACCIOLI, NUNCIO AT VENICE,  
AND LATE NUNCIO IN SPAIN.

MY LORD,

**I** HAVE the honour of sending you the resolution of the Holy Office, which will certainly be agreeable to your manner of thinking. I have expressed in it all the zeal that I am capable of, to prove to you the infinite esteem I have of your worth. I wish the Church always had Prelates as exemplary as your Lordship! It is what the Venetians often say, and what transports me with joy, when I have a happy opportunity of assuring you of all the respect with which I am, &c.

ROME, 21st Oct. 1754.

L E T -

## L E T T E R L.

T O C O U N T \* \* \*.

**I**F scruples lay hold of you, my dear Friend, you are ruined; you will either relapse into dissipation, or serve God like a slave. Remember that the Jewish law was a law of fear, but the new law is a law of love. The vessel of clay to which our souls are attached does not allow of angelical perfection.

Religion is degraded; when we apply our attention to trifles. While men pray, there will be inattentions; as long as men act, there will be errors in conduct, because every man is subject to vanity and error—*Omnis homo mendax*.

There are none but false devotées who are scandalized at every thing, and who see the Devil every where. Fulfil the law without labouring in spirit, and without straining the imagination, and you will render yourself agreeable to God. Nothing checks the soul in the road of piety,  
so

so much as scruples ill understood. As too much retirement encourages gloomy notions, and society dispels them, frequent rational company, and live but little alone. — Be not discouraged, when you feel yourself tempted. Temptation is a trial which teaches us to distrust ourselves, and adds to our merits when conquered.

Come and see me, and we will endeavour together to find out the source of these doubts which torment you. I have nothing more at heart than to be assured you are a good Christian; but I shall be unhappy if you give way to scruples; for then every thing will alarm you, and you will become insupportable to yourself.

I have always forgot to speak to you about your worthy relation. See what sad tricks my absence of mind sometimes plays me; but the heart has no share in the omission. The Marchioness, more startled than penetrated with my remonstrances, does not know how to act.--When devotion once hesitates about being reconciled, you must only expect doubtful proofs of it: But as we take what we can get of a bad

debt, so should you take in good part the slightest marks of politeness that your dear Cousin may henceforward think proper to shew you.

Persevere, my dear friend, persevere. I am edified by your courage, and happy that you are pleased with the guide I gave you. Is he not a worthy man, and one that will certainly lead to heaven? He has a wonderful skill in discovering people's dispositions, and is the man in the world the most proper for gaining their confidence.

I approve of what you lay aside for charitable purposes; but I do not love bestowing drop by drop, or tying one's-self down to regular alms-giving, so as to have nothing left for an object in extreme want. It is better to rescue one or two families from distress, than to scatter a few pieces at random, without compleating any purpose. Besides, it would be proper to have always a sum in reserve for extraordinary cases; for by this oeconomy you will have a remedy at hand for unforeseen contingencies.

Do



Do not give into that wrong notion of charity, which, without considering either birth or extraction, would have all its objects clothed and fed like the meanest of the people.

Charity humbles nobody, and should be proportioned to circumstances and conditions. To give haughtily, is worse than to withhold. Distribute your alms in such a manner, as to appear more humble yourself than they who receive. Religion is too noble, to approve of those little souls who oblige with insolence, and make the importance of their services be felt.

Be not content with giving, but lend likewise, according to the precepts of the Scripture, to him that is in need. I do not know a more contemptible object than money, if it be not employed to assist our neighbour. Can the insipid pleasure of heaping up crowns, be compared with the satisfaction of conferring happiness, and the felicity of attaining heaven?

When you are become an oeconomist without avarice, and generous without

prodigality, I will look upon you as *a rich man who can be saved*. Prevent wants, without waiting till you be asked: true charity can divine.

Adieu.—It appears superfluous to repeat, at the end of this letter, that I am your best friend and humblest servant. Certainly you do not doubt it, or you affront me most sensibly.

ROME, 19th April, 1752.

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## LETTER LI.

### TO THE SAME.

**Y**OU ask me, wherefore there are days that, given up to melancholy without knowing the cause, we are a burden to ourselves? To which I answer,

First, It is because we are dependent upon a body which is not always in perfect equilibrium.

Secondly, Because God Almighty would make us sensible that this life is not our happiness, and that we shall always be ill at ease

ease till we leave it; and it was for that reason the Apostle longed after the things that are eternal.

There are fogs in the moral as well as in the natural world; and the soul, like the sky, hath its clouds.

The best way to dispel such glooms is to seek employment. We have not leisure to become either sad or languid, when we are seriously occupied. Study is the element of the mind. *You will neither be a burden to yourself nor to others*, said Seneca, *if you love study*. It is inconceivable how many wretched quarters of hours there are in life, from which employment would defend us. You cannot be happy in this world, but by knowing how to blunt your sorrows. He who has no vexation at present, either has had or will have some; because pain and sorrow are an inheritance from our first father, and we cannot entirely preserve ourselves from them.

I am, with all my heart, &c.

ROME 27th April 1752.

## L E T T E R LII.

TO MONSIGNOR FIRNIANI, BISHOP  
OF PERUSA.

MY LORD,

**T**HE suitor you recommend to me seems to prefer the Order of the Augustines to the Franciscans; and far from being dissatisfied at it, I have just now been to conduct him to a Monk who is one of my friends; he will take all possible care of him, and after a proper trial, will give him the habit of St. Augustine.

Provided we bring the true spirit of piety with us, it is no matter in what Convent we are placed. All the different Orders make but one and the same family, in my eyes: and happily I have no partiality for my own Community, to the prejudice of another. Besides, the Augustines always connected knowledge with virtue; and no man, whose heart is well disposed, can fail to receive excellent instructions among them.

The

The P. Capuchin, who spoke to your Lordship so favourably of me, has seen but little of me; he judges of me as of a landscape, which is imagined to be something fine, at a distance; but is found on a nearer view, to be nothing extraordinary. I will oblige him to recant, when he returns to Rome, because he shall then see me as I really am. It is the best way that I know of correcting the mistaken notions which men may have formed of me. I recommend myself to your prayers, which I believe to be most effectual before God, and I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 26th Aug. 1753.

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## L E T T E R LIII.

TO THE PRELATE GERATI.

MY LORD,

**I** HAVE just now been to see your good old friend, M. Bottari, and found him, as usual, immersed in the deepest and most interesting studies. He passed from



that to a picturesque conversation, which delighted me excessively; for he does not speak, but paints. He is sententious and figurative; and never fails perfectly to characterise the books and people he describes.

We had a good deal of discourse about the Roman Antiquities, and the variety of our Libraries, which, tho' not all of equal excellence, form an admirable collection. Two well informed Englishmen shared in our conversation, and spoke so as to demand attention. They are a people that travel to advantage, profiting by whatever they see. They are said to take the substance of things, while the French are content with the surface. But I leave you to decide, whether for commerce with mankind, it is better to be superficial and agreeable, or profound and gloomy.

Cardinal Bentivoglio said, *that we should see an Englishman when we want to think, and a Frenchman when we want to converse.*

I open my cell to both one and the other with the greatest pleasure, confessing to you always that the French vivacity has  
some-

something very attracting for me. One loves to meet his own likeness; and you know that I am neither slow, nor silent.

You should have received the book which P. Massoleni of the Order of the Oratory sent you. You will find it both interesting and well executed. Methinks I see you plunged into this work, without being able to tear yourself from it. The retired man has real pleasures, which surpass all the joys of the world. But hush! that is a secret of the studious, which should not be divulged.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 13 Nov. 1753.

## L E T T E R LIV.

TO A FRANCISCAN FRIAR.

**I** FEEL something within me which makes me take pen in hand; and whispers in my ear to write to you, that it is a great while since I have had that sweet  
 I 5 pleasure ;

pleasure; and it is my friendship for you which procures it me at present.

It must be confessed, as St. Augustine says, *that friendship has something very charming in it, and that whoever does not know its delights, should be excluded from society.* The Saviour of the world hath canonised it, by his particular attachment to St. John, and we see that the greatest Saints have cultivated it with the most religious attention.

Continue to be always my good friend. Although the world says that Monks love nobody, I have found the most sincere and friendly hearts in the Cloister:—but the world will believe nothing of this, because it will have us to be wrong in every thing; but what signifies that to us, while we taste the sweets of such a sympathy, and that I continue no less than ever,

Your friend and servant.

ROME, 29th Dec. 1754.

## L E T T E R LV.

T O L A D Y P I G L I A N I.

**I**T is not an indifferent matter, the keeping your two daughters with you :—the condition of a mother imposes the most important duties on you. The world will continually interpose between you and your children, if you do not take care to keep it at a distance;—not with austerity, which excites only murmuring, but with that prudence which gains confidence.

Your daughters will only prove hypocrites, if you perplex and incumber them with instructions; instead of which they will love religion, if you know how to make them do so by your example, and by your gentleness.

Girls of twenty are not to be used as if they were but ten; there is a treatment and method of instruction suited to different ages, as well as to different conditions of life.

Encourage a taste for good Authors, and for employment, as much as you can; but with that freedom which does not tie them down to the minute; and with a spirit of discernment, which knows how to distinguish what is proper for a secular house, from what would more fitly become a Cloister.

Establish your daughters according to their fortunes and rank, without restraining their inclinations, unless they should tend to dissipation or folly. Marriage is the natural condition of mankind; but there are exceptions to this rule, when it may be dispensed with.

Without being in love with the vanities of the world, do not make yourself ridiculous by opposing the customs of the times. Piety becomes a subject of railery, when it appears to affect singularity; a prudent woman should avoid rendering herself remarkable.

When a woman is born to a certain rank of life, she should dress suitably to her pretensions; but still within that line which modesty and decency prescribe.

See



See that your daughters mix in good company. True devotion is neither rustic nor austere. Solitude ill employed irritates the passions, and it is often better for young people to see well chosen company, than to remain alone. You should inspire them with chearfulness, that they may not assume a sanctified air. Their recreations should be walking, and little innocent pastimes; but when you come to talk of application, do not mention deep studies, nor abstract sciences, which often make the sex vain and talkative.

Above all things, make yourself beloved; it is the greatest pleasure that a mother can aspire to, and the greatest prerogative she can enjoy, in order to effect the good she purposes.

Take care that your domestics be religious and honest; they are capable of every thing that is bad, if they do not fear God. They should not be treated either with haughtiness or familiarity, but as people who are of the same nature, but your inferiors. Justice is the mother of order: every thing has its proper place, when we act with equity.

Never

Never punish but with regret, and always pardon with pleasure.

Frequent your parish church, that the sheep may be often found with their Pastor; it is a practice conformable to the holy Canons, as well as of antient usage.

Your own wisdom will teach you the rest. I depend much upon your understanding and goodwill, as you may be assured of the respectful consideration with which I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 15th Nov. 1754.

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## LETTER LVI.

TO COUNT ALGAROTTI.

MY DEAR COUNT,

**M**ANAGE your matters so, that in spite of your philosophy, I may see you in Heaven; for I should be exceedingly grieved to lose sight of you for an eternity.

You are one of those singular men, both in head and heart, whom we would wish  
to

to love beyond the grave, when we have the pleasure of knowing them; and nobody has more reasons than you to be persuaded that the soul is incorporeal and immortal. The years pass away for the Philosopher, as they do for the fool; but in what they are to terminate, must engage the mind of a thinking man.

Confess that I know how to accommodate my sermons, so as not to startle one of the *beaux-esprits*: and if discourses were oftener made with as much brevity and friendship, you would sometimes, perhaps, listen to the preachers.—But it is not enough to hear them; what is said should find its way to the heart.—May it produce good fruit there; and may the amiable Algarotti become as good a Christian, as he is a Philosopher, and then I shall be doubly his friend and servant!

ROME, 11th Dec. 1754.

LET-

## L E T T E R LVII.

TO MONSIGNOR ROTA, DECIPHERER.

**I** BELIEVE, my Lord, that to make it possible for us to meet, it is necessary to make an appointment. — I beg of you to fix the time, and most certainly I will not fail to attend you.

There is no time I regret the loss of so much, as that which is spent in anti-chambers. Time is the most precious gift which God hath given us, and man dissipates it with a profusion equally extravagant and unaccountable.

Alas! time is a property exposed to be pillaged, and every one robs us of a part; in spite of all my care to preserve it, I see it slip through my hands, and I can scarcely say that it flies before it is already gone.

I wait your orders to attend you, and to tell you, if there are moments in which you are to be seen, that there are none in  
which.

which I am not with equal attachment and respect, my Lord,

Your most humble, &c.

ROME, 3d Jan. 1754.

## L E T T E R LVIII.

TO THE HOLY STANDARD-BEARER OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SAINT MARINO.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

**A**LTHOUGH you are only the little sovereign of a very little state, you have a soul which puts you on a level with the greatest Princes. It is not the extent of empires which constitutes the merit of Emperors. A father of a family may have much virtue, and a chief magistrate of Saint Marino a great reputation.

I find nothing so delightful as being at the head of a little Canton, scarce perceivable in the map, where neither war nor discord are known, and where there are no storms but when the sky is darkened;—where there is no ambition, except that of supporting one's self in silence and mediocrity;



cricity ; — where all property seems to be in common, from the custom of every one's being ready to assist his neighbour.

O, how that little nook of earth pleases me ! How happy to live there ! Not in the midst of tumults which distract great cities ; nor in the midst of the great, who oppress the small ; nor in the scenes of pomp, which corrupt the heart and dazzle the eyes ! It is a place where I would willingly pitch my tabernacle, and where my heart has long fixed its abode, from the friendship I have for you. There cannot be a greater burden than sovereignty ; but your's is so light, that it leaves your movements free ; especially when I come to compare it with those monarchies which the Sovereign cannot govern without multiplying himself, and having eyes every where.

Every thing conspires against a Prince who is at the head of a great kingdom. They who are about him seek to deceive him, at the very time when he persuades himself that they are paying him their court. If he is debauched, they flat-

ter him in his vices; if he is pious, they play the hypocrite, and put on the mask of religion; if he is cruel, they say he is just, and he never hears the truth.

He must often descend into his own heart to seek it; but, alas! how he is to be pitied, if he does not find it there! History would not be filled with the reigns of so many bad princes, if they had not loved to live at a distance from truth. Truth is the only safe friend of Kings, when they will hearken to it; but they often deceive themselves, looking upon it as an importunate monitor, that should be kept at a distance, or punished for its intrusion.

As for my part, who loved it from my infancy, I think that I shall always love it, though it should say the severest things. Truths are like bitter medicines, which displease the palate, but restore our health. Truth is certainly better known at St. Marino than any where else:---it is seen only obliquely at great courts, but you look it full in the face, and embrace it with the affection of a friend.

I will

I will not send you the book you want to see; --- it is an ill-formed production, badly translated from the French, and abounds with heresies against morality and sound doctrine. It speaks, nevertheless, of *humanity*; for now-a-days That is the plausible phrase, which is substituted in the room of *charity*; because humanity is but a *Pagan* virtue, and charity is a *Christian* one. The modern Philosophy would have nothing to do with any thing that relates to Christianity, and thereby shews to the eye of Reason that it prefers what is defective.

The old Philosophers, who were not enlightened by faith, and had not the advantage of knowing the true God, wished for a revelation; while the modern ones reject that which they cannot mistake: but in so doing they betray themselves; for if they had a right turn of mind and a pure heart, and were as *humane* as they pretend to be, they would receive with up-lifted hands a religion which condemns even bad inclinations, which expressly commands the love of our neighbour, and promiseth an eternal

nal recompense to all those who have assisted their brethren, who have been faithful to their God, their King, and their Country. If we are virtuous, we cannot be averse to a religion which preaches and enjoins nothing but virtue.

When I see the words *legislation, patriotism, humanity*, constantly flowing from the pen of those Writers who anathematise Christianity, I say, without any apprehension of deceiving myself, "These men mock the Public, and inwardly have neither patriotism nor humanity." From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; but such men only establish this general rule, by their being an exception to it.

This is the way in which I would attack the modern Philosophers, if I thought I had sufficient strength to combat them. They might cry out against my argument, because I should press them closely; but they should have no reason to complain of my superciliousness. I would speak to them as the tenderest friend, equally zealous

lous for their good, as for my own; as a candid and impartial author, who would acknowledge their abilities, and do justice to the excellence of their genius.---I am so presumptuous as to believe that they would have esteemed me, although their antagonist.

I cannot execute this design, because here I do not enjoy that happy tranquility, which you are in possession of at Saint Marino:---there you live in a state of happy leisure and repose, which emulates the condition of the blest.

However, this tranquility must be fatal to the Sciences and the *Belles-lettres*, since I do not see, in the immense catalogue of celebrated Writers, any of the natives of Saint Marino distinguished for their literature. I advise you to spur up your subjects while you are in place; but make haste; for it is not of your kingdom that it is said, *It will have no end*. There is genius in your country, and it wants only to be roused.

Behold



Behold a letter as large as your state, especially if you attend to the heart which dictates it, and in which you often occupy a very considerable place. Thus they write and love, who have been together at college. Adieu.

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## L E T T E R LIX.

T O C O U N T \* \* \* .

**I** WOULD not have had you study Mathematics, my dear friend, till you were confirmed in the principles of Religion. I was afraid that by applying yourself to a science which will admit nothing but what is demonstrative, you would do as many Mathematicians do, who think of making our mysteries submit to demonstration. The Mathematics, extensive as they are, are very limited, when we think of what relates to God. All the lines that can be drawn upon earth, all the points that can be made, are but infinitely small in comparison

parison of that immense Being, who neither admits parallel nor proportion.

Mathematics will enable you to think justly. Without them, there is a certain method wanting which is necessary to rectify our thoughts, to arrange our ideas, and to determine our judgments aright. It is easy to perceive in reading a book, even a moral one, whether the Author be a Mathematician or not. I am seldom deceived in this observation. The famous French Metaphysician would not have composed *The Inquiry after Truth* †, nor the famous Leibnitz his *Theodicé*, if they had not been Mathematicians. We perceive in their productions that geometrical order which brings their reasonings into small compass, while it gives them energy and method.

Order is delightful; there is nothing in nature but what is stamped with it, and without it there could be no harmony. We may likewise say that the Mathematics are an universal science which connects all the rest, and displays them in their happiest relations.

† Malebranche.

The Mathematician, at the first look, is sure to analyse and unravel a subject or proposition with justness; but a man who does not understand this science, sees only in a vague, and almost always in an imperfect manner.

Apply yourself then to this great branch of knowledge, so worthy of our curiosity, and so necessary to the uses of life; but not in such a degree as to throw you into absence:---endeavour to be always recollected, whatever are your studies.

If I was as young as you, and had your leisure, I would acquire a more extensive knowledge of Geometry. I have always cherished that science with a particular predilection. My turn of mind made me seek with avidity every thing that was methodical; and I pay but little respect to those works which are only the exercises of imagination.

We have three principal sciences, which I compare to the three essential parts of the human composition: — Theology, which, by its spirituality, resembles our soul; the Mathematics, which, by their

combination and justness, express our reason; and Natural Philosophy, which, by its mechanical operations, denotes our bodies: and these three Sciences (which ought to maintain a perfect harmony) while they keep within their proper sphere, necessarily elevate us towards their Author, the source and fullness of all light.

I formerly undertook a work, while I was at Ascoli, the intention of which was to shew the perfect agreement between all the Sciences. I pointed out their source, their end, and their relations; but the exercises of the Cloister, and the lectures I was obliged to give, prevented me from finishing it. I still have some fragments, which I shall search for among my papers, and you may read them, if you think they can amuse you. There are some ideas; and some views, but it is only a sketch, which must be filled up by the Reader, and you are perfectly capable of the task.

Philosophy without Geometry, is like medicine without chemistry. The greater number of modern Philosophers reason inconclusively,

conclusively, only because they are unacquainted with Geometry. They mistake sophisms for truths; and if they lay down just principles, they deduce false conclusions from them.

Study alone will not make a learned man, nor a knowledge of the sciences a Philosopher. But we live in an age where great words impose, and where men think themselves to be eminent geniuses, if they only contrive a set of singular opinions. Distrust those Writers who employ themselves rather about the style than the matter, and who hazard every thing for the sake of surprising.

I shall send you, by the first opportunity, a work upon Trigonometry; and if it is necessary, I will prove to you geometrically, that is to say to a demonstration, that I am always your best friend.

ROME, 22d June, 1753.



## L E T T E R LX.

TO A FRIAR OF THE MINOR CONVENTUALS.

**Y**OU are mistaken in thinking, my reverend Father, that I take no part in our general Chapters. I feel a warm interest in them; not like an ambitious man who desires to obtain promotion, but as a friend of our Order, who wisheth ardently that piety and science may hold the first rank in it. A Superior who is only learned may do much harm; and he who is only a devotee may do much more. It is a most judicious reflection of St. Theresa, *that there is no resource, where there is no understanding*. Besides science and piety, a Superior has need of a spirit of wisdom and discernment; for there is a great deal of difference between teaching and governing. It has been remarked, that all the Writers, even those who have given the finest lessons to Kings, have not been fit for administration. Good sense is a surer guide than

than fine parts, or even genius, to conduct men prudently. They who have too much vivacity, have too many ideas, and are continually changing their resolutions.

I employ myself with all possible zeal, to have those chosen Superiors who are fittest for governing, but without any selfish view or intrigue. I wish for no other empire but my Cell; and even there have trouble enough to restrain my thoughts and imagination within bounds. Man is so much the puppet of his passions, that he does not always what he would, although always free to act, or to remain inactive.

What you desire shall be proposed in the next assembly; and I presume, as far as one can answer for a multitude of opinions and different spirits, that they will agree to it. Truth ought naturally to draw all men after it; but it presents itself under so many different aspects, that every one judges according to his own eyes;—the view varies according to our notions, and according to our interests.

Be convinced that I am, as I have been, always ready to oblige you, and always your good friend and servant.

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## LETTER LXI.

TO CARDINAL SPINELLI.

MOST EMINENT,

**Y**OUR Eminency may be sure that the book will be approved as it deserves. It contains nothing but what is most orthodox and practicable, whatever some people, who think themselves inspired, may say. If Pharisaical zeal was allowed to govern, we should very soon have nothing in the Church but trifling ceremony; and Religion, which is so beautiful and sublime, would become a round of superstitions.

People generally love those things which do not tend to reform the heart; and are pleased with growing old without rooting out bad habits, believing a few prayers repeated in haste sufficient to carry them to Heaven.

It

It is not astonishing, that the world should seduce us; but it is surprising that men who set themselves up to oppose its maxims, do not preserve the souls of the people from this seduction. Pharisees have lived in all ages, and will continue to the end of the world. They build whitened sepulchres, instead of erecting temples to the Eternal; and they lay the faithful asleep, by amusing them with ceremonials, which neither influence the heart nor understanding.

It were to be wished that all the world saw with the same eyes as your Eminency. What a reformation of abuses! What absurd usages suppressed! When the Pastor nourisheth himself with the Holy Scripture, the Councils, and the Fathers, there is no danger of his Diocese becoming superstitious. Muratori said, that *trifling devotions for the most part resembled the compositions for taking out stains, which lessen the spot only in appearance, but, in fact, make it larger.*

Although loaded with business, I will prove to you, my Lord, by charging myself with whatever commands you please

to lay upon me, that I will never refuse the happiness of convincing you of the profound respect with which I am, &c.

ROME, 3d July, 1752.

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## LETTER LXII.

TO THE ABBE LAMI.

**I** DO not know how I shall be able to recollect myself in the midst of the disorders which reign in my Cell and in my head.—Every thing is pell-mell there:—one must write to a methodical Author like you, to unravel such a chaos.

If you had characterised the poetic genius of each nation, your last letter would have been a master-piece. The Italians are not such Poets as the English, nor the Germans such as the French. They resemble each other in principles, but they differ in fervency and enthusiasm. The German poesy is a fire which shines; the French, a fire that sparkles; the Italian,  
a fire



a fire that burns; and the English, a fire that blackens.

We accumulate too many images in our pieces in verse; and were we less prodigal of them, they would make a more lively impression. Nothing awakens the reader better than surprise; and that cannot happen when those things are too often multiplied which produce this effect.

Happy the sober spirit, which in poetry, as in prose, is delicately sparing in episodes and descriptions! I soon grow tired in a garden in which I see cascades and thickets every where; but am charmed with groves and pieces of water discovered by chance. Violets appear infinitely more beautiful, when seen only by halves under a thick foliage. A flower withdrawing from the view excites our curiosity.

There is nothing beautiful but by comparison. If every thing was equally magnificent, the eyes would soon grow tired with continued admiration. Nature, which ought to be the model of all writers, varies her objects so as never to fatigue the sight: the richest meadow is found in the neigh-

bourhood of the simplest valley ; and frequently a charming river at the side of a gloomy hill.

Repeat these lessons, my dear Abbé, to correct our Poets, if possible, of their profusion of beauties, which resemble heaps of gold piled up without either order or taste. Your detached sheets are admired as much as your genius ; and when a Journalist has acquired this double fame, he may talk like a master, with a certainty of being attended to.

When I was a young scholar, I lost one of my companions, to whom sympathy had strongly united me. Alas ! after having taken many solitary walks together, and made many reflections upon things which we knew not at that time, but wished to know, he died ; and I thought I could not find a better way of assuaging my sorrows, than by addressing some verses to him, from a conviction which I then had, and still have, that we only change one life for another when we appear to die.

I chiefly

I chiefly praised his candour and piety, for he was a model of virtue. But the fault of this eulogium, as I was made to observe, was its being overloaded with description. I introduced all the beauties of the country, and did not give my reader time to breathe. It was a tree choaked with leaves and branches, where there was no fruit to be seen.

From that time I never attempted any more verses. I contented myself with reading the Poets, and applying myself to know their faults and their beauties. All that vexed me was, that my Poem being so full of errors, would not descend to posterity, and that my friend on every account deserved the honour of being immortalized.

| He will never be effaced from my heart: and thus it is that true friends have a resource in sentiment, when they have not sufficient genius to perpetuate the memory of their affections. — This is my position in respect to you. Withdraw your attention from these thoughts of mine to fix it upon the attachment I have vowed to

K 6

you,

you, and you will find that if I am not a good speaker, I am at least a good friend and a good servant. Put me to the proof.

ROME, 10th Dec. 1755.

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## L E T T E R    L X I I I .

TO BARON KRONECH, A GERMAN.

**I** DO not know, Sir, whether I should admire most, your genius or agreeable manners. Nothing can prove better than your example, how eminently the Germans are endowed with the necessary qualities for forming friendships. All those with whom I am acquainted, have the most amiable dispositions in the world.

If you continue to employ yourself usefully, you will do honour to your nation, and to all those who have known you. I congratulate myself that an accident procured me the pleasure of your agreeable conversation. I have always been a gainer by being communicative; for I have met  
with

with people who have merited the strongest attachment, or who have needed advice and assistance.

It is so agreeable to oblige, that when we are led by that motive, we cannot make too great advances to those that fall in our way. I could wish not to finish this letter, from the desire I have to entertain you; but I must attend prayers, and my usual employments, and am also afraid of tiring you. Receive, then, without ceremony, the vows which I put up that I may see you again, and that I may repeat how much I have the honour to be,

Your's, &c.

LET



## LETTER LXIV.

TO MONSIEUR DE LA BRÜYERE, CHARGED  
WITH THE AFFAIRS OF FRANCE, AT THE  
COURT OF ROME.

SIR,

**I** CALLED at your house, with a design to steal at least one hour of your time, with a certainty of improving by it; but I could not penetrate into that precious closet, from whence you correspond with that of Versailles in a manner so honourable for yourself, and advantageous for your amiable nation.

I retired very speedily, as I have no politicks, but that of taking care to be engaged in none; and I returned saying to myself, that I ought not to appear again at your house unless I am sent for.

Nevertheless, if I knew the hour you dedicate to your good friends the *Belles Lettres*, I would anxiously endeavour to approach you. Something would issue from your excellent memory and brilliant imagination,

gination, which would embellish mine, and serve to distinguish me in society.

I always regret having heard but half the reading of a certain manuscript, where Rome, shewn as she is, most amply satisfies the curiosity. There the flowers are mixt with the fruit, and it is the most agreeable basket which can be presented to people of taste. My soul is impatient to hear the rest. I know you are too obliging not to satisfy her desire.

You could not have chosen a happier epoch than the reign of Benedict XIV. to paint Rome to advantage. It seems as if he revived this City in the eyes of Foreigners, and that the Sciences resume fresh lustre to pay their court to him : so true it is, that a Monarch only is wanted to give life and motion even to things that are inanimate.

If by great accident there happens to be one hour with which you are embarrassed, send for Ganganelli, and he will prove to you that there is neither study, business, nor visit, which can detain him, when

when he is called upon to prove the zeal with which he has the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 2d March 1753.

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## L E T T E R L X V.

T O T H E S A M E.

**I**NDEED you are too generous, when you would give me three hours of your time, and leave them to my own choice. To-morrow, then, since you allow me, I will go and enjoy the benefit of your kindness. It would be in vain to whisper to my Genius, to deck herself out for this interview with all the elegance she is mistress of; for she must be content with admiring you in silence. Timidity, with a consciousness of possessing but few or trifling accomplishments, will hinder her from appearing to the least advantage before you. You must therefore expect to be at the whole expence of the entertainment yourself; and no one but you, who are as

modest

modest as you are well informed, will repine at it.

Notwithstanding all the pleasure I shall have in waiting on you, I should still have more, if the Duke de Nivernois is yet with you, whose soul and genius is universally admired. He is one who is only learned with the learned, and whose science, if we may use the expression, is interwoven with roses and jessamine.

I will communicate a production of one of our young Monks to you, which will convince you that there is not only learning, but likewise genius to be met with in the Cloister, when talents are exercised as if they were encouraged. Plants that have been thought barren, have sometimes produced most excellent fruit.

I have the honour, &c.

ROME, 3d March, 1753.

LET

## L E T T E R L X V.

TO CARDINAL QUIRINI, BISHOP OF  
BRÈSCIA.

MOST EMINENT,

**Y**OUR Eminency does me too much honour, and has too good an opinion of my weak abilities, when you deign to ask me how Theology should be studied and taught.

Formerly there was only one way of unfolding that sublime science, which having its source in God himself, spreads in the midst of the church like a majestic and most abundant River; and that was called the *Positive*.

From the respect which was paid to the sacred doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, the Councils, and the Fathers, the Professors of Theology were undoubtedly content to place morals and the evangelical opinions quite simply before the eyes of the students. Thus the Commandments  
of



of God were proposed formerly to the Jews without a commentary, and they treasured them up in their hearts and memories, as what ought principally to engage them, and be the means of their happiness.

The Church, although seated upon the Holy Mountain whose foundations are eternal, has been always agitated by tempests, and has seen rebellious children springing from her bowels, from time to time, who had learnt the delusions of sophistry; and it was their artful language which obliged the Defenders of the Faith to assume the method of syllogism.

All the world knows the time when certain teachers were obliged to arm themselves with enthymemes and syllogisms, to drive those heretics from their last entrenchments, who cavilled at the meanings of the Scripture, and at all its terms.

Thomas, that Angel of the Schools, and Scotus, that subtle Doctor, thought they must make use of the same form; and their method, supported by their shining reputation, insensibly prevailed in the Universities.

But

But as every thing commonly degenerates, it was not possible to keep the *positive* Theology in use; and the manner of teaching in the Schools, which thence got the name of *scholastic*, ran too often upon words and distinctions. They perplexed every thing from their solicitude to clear up every thing, and often replied to nothing, from their desire to answer all.

Besides that this wrangling only suited Philosophy, it had the appearance of rendering the most certain things problematical: and this was the more unhappy, as they agitated some ridiculous questions, and split upon mysteries, whose sublimity and depth ought to have stopped every man of reflection.

However, as the Scholastic method had the advantage of assisting the memory, by giving form to reasonings; and the abuse with which it is reproached, never darkened the holy truths, whose reign is as lasting as God himself; it was thought proper still to preserve it.

I have always thought, my Lord, that the Scholastic manner modified, as it is taught

taught at the Sapienza in Rome, and in the first schools of the christian world, might subsist without enervating morals, or altering doctrines, provided the Professors be men of sound understanding, and not apt to mistake simple opinions for articles of Faith.

Nothing is more dangerous than to give as a matter of faith, what is only a matter of opinion, and to confound a pious belief with a thing which is revealed. The true Theologist employs only real and solid distinctions, and draws no consequences but from clear and precise principles.

A truth is never better established than by the universal approbation of all the Churches, which is a circumstance the greater part of modern Theologians do not sufficiently attend to. The tenets of the Eucharist never appeared more solidly established, than when the doctrines on that subject among the Roman Catholics and the Greek schismatics were shewn to be so similar.

Theology,

Theology, to be solid and shining, that is to say, to preserve its most essential attributes, needs only a clear and simple exposition of all the articles of the Faith, and then it will appear supported by all its proofs, and all its authorities.

If Theologians would establish, for example, the truth of the mystery of the Incarnation, they must shew that God, who could not act but for himself, had in view at the creation of the world, the Eternal Word by whom the world was made; and *that in forming Adam, as Tertullian says, he traced out the lineaments of Jesus Christ.* This is conformable to the doctrine of St. Paul, who declares in the most express manner, that all exists in the Divine Mediator, and subsists only by him. *Omnia per ipsum & in ipso constant.*

They prove afterwards by the types and the prophecies, whose authenticity they shew, that the Incarnation is their object, and that there is nothing in these holy books which does not relate to it, directly or indirectly: then they shew the time and the place where this ineffable mystery was accomplished, examining the character of  
the

the signs which accompanied it, the witnesses who attested it, the wonders which followed it, and display all the traditions upon that subject.

They next demonstrate the authority of the Fathers of the Church, the force of their reasonings, the sublimity of their comparisons; and employ the scholastic method to unravel the sophistries of heresiarchs, to combat and conquer them with their own weapons.

Thus Positive theology resembles a magnificent garden, and the Scholastic method of reasoning is a hedge stuck with thorns, to prevent noxious animals from getting in and ravaging it.

If I taught only the Scholastic method when I was Lecturer in theology, it was because, being of the same brotherhood with Scotus, I could not decline teaching after his method. An individual cannot change the mode of instruction in an Order of which he is a member, but with an ill grace; it might be often attended with bad consequences---not that we should servilely embrace fantastical opinions.

For



For you, my Lord, who, in quality of Bishop, have an incontestible right to prescribe the method of teaching, and give it what form you please, I beg of you to recommend to your Theologians to use the Scholastic mode with discretion, for fear of enervating Theology.

I believe your views would be answered, if they were to draw from the sources, instead of simply copying from the manuscript theologies; and if they would be content to explain the doctrines of the Church without giving into disputes, or party spirit.

This spirit is the more dangerous, my Lord, as they then substitute their own opinions for eternal truths, which every one ought to respect; and enter into alterations which, under pretence of supporting the cause of God, extinguish charity.

Do not permit them to support free will, by denying the almighty power of grace; nor, by enhancing the value of that inestimable and intirely free gift, to destroy liberty; nor from too great respect for the Saints, to forget what they owe  
to

to Jesus Christ. All theological truths are but one, in the manner they hold together; and there are some covered with a mysterious veil, which it is impossible to draw aside.

The great fault of some Theologians is a desire to explain every thing, and not knowing where to stop. The Apostle has told us, for example, in speaking of Heaven, *that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard what God has reserved for his Saints*; and yet they give us a description of Paradise as if they had just returned from thence. They assign ranks to the Chosen, and would almost cry out “*Heresy!*” against the men who should dare to contradict them. The true Theologian stops where he should; and when a thing has not been revealed, or the Church has not pronounced upon it, he does not take upon him to decide. There will always be an impenetrable cloud between God and man, till the moment of eternity.

The types ceased with the Old Law, to give place to reality; but the evidence is not to be found till after death; such is

the oeconomy of Religion. It were to be wished, my Lord, that in speaking of God they would always pronounce his name with a holy fervour; not as a Being whom they read, but as a Spirit whose immense perfections excite the greatest respect and admiration. Thus, instead of saying that God would be unjust, God would be a liar, God would not be all-powerful, if such and such things happened; they should take care that no such injurious expressions be joined to that name. Let us be content to answer with St. Paul; "Can there be any injustice in God? God forbid:" *Numquid iniquitas apud Deum? Absit.*

The name of God is so awful and holy, that it should never be introduced into human compositions or debates. Is it not enough that man may exercise his talents upon the phenomena of nature, that he may dispute about the elements and their effects, without making God himself the subject of his argument?

This has rendered Theology ridiculous in the eyes of Freethinkers, and  
has

has perhaps taught them to use the Almighty's name in all their objections and their sarcasms :--for how can theology, which is the display of the wisdom of Providence, and the attributes of an infinite Being who is all-excellent and all-powerful, appear to be a trifling science, except from its being presented without dignity? Shall the nature of a grain of sand that the wind sporteth with at pleasure, of an insect that is trod under foot, of the earth itself which is perishable, be studied before the knowledge of God himself? that God from whom we have our being, in whom we live and move, before whom the sea is but a drop of water, the mountains a point, and the whole universe an atom?

It is with the grandeur of the immense and Supreme Being, that the Theologian should begin his course of theology. After having demonstrated his absolute necessary existence, and that it is necessarily eternal; after having sought for the creation of spirits even in his bosom; after having proved that all flows from him as

its first principle; that all breathes in him as its center; that all returns to him as its end; he should then display his immense wisdom and his infinite goodness, from whence results Revelation, and the worship it has ordained.

Then the natural law, the written law, and the law of Grace, should appear each in their pre-eminence, and according to the order of chronology. He should next demonstrate how God was always worshipped by a small number in spirit and in truth; how the Church annihilated the Synagogue, and from age to age cut off those rebels who would have corrupted its morals and opinions; and how, always powerful in words and works, it was supported by learned teachers, and preserved its purity amidst the most dreadful scandals and cruel divisions.

It is necessary that those who study Theology should be edified by what is taught them, and not be amused by false glimmerings, more capable of dazzling than illuminating them. Let them be led to the purest source under the guidance of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and shun with  
care



care whatever has the appearance of novelty ; —let them be inspired with a spirit of evangelical toleration, with a tenderness even for those who combat the Faith, and be impressed with the spirit of Jesus Christ, which is not that of harshness or of tyranny.

It is not by invectives against heretics, nor by giving vent to a bitter zeal against unbelievers, that they are to be led back into the way of truth, but by manifesting a sincere desire for their conversion ; and in speaking of, to shew a sincere love for, them, even at the time when their sophistries are to be exposed.

It is necessary that the Professors of Theology should oppose the Pagan Theologians to the Christian, as the surest means of overturning their Mythology, covering their ancient superstitions with perpetual ridicule, and raising the doctrines of the Incarnate Word on their ruins.

It is yet more necessary that these Professors be not systematical. They should depend upon the Church, the Scriptures, and Tradition, when they teach eternal truths, because

they are then deputed by the body of Pastors to teach in their name, and to exercise their power.

Would to God they had faithfully followed this method! The Church would not have seen the most afflicting and obstinate disputes arise in her bosom. Passion takes place of charity, and the hatred of the Teachers produceth the most fatal effects.

Hence it follows, my Lord, that your Eminency cannot be too attentive in appointing moderate men as Theologians, from the apprehension that bitter zeal may do more harm than good. The spirit of the Gospel is a spirit of peace, and it is not right that they who preach it should be turbulent.

If I dare, my Lord, I would beg your Eminency to compose a body of Theology which should be the established lesson of your diocese, and would certainly be adopted by a number of Bishops. The liberty of the schools should only be allowed in indifferent questions; because there is only one Baptism and one Faith.

The-

Theology should not be employed to exercise the genius of young people, but to enlighten them, and to raise them up, even to Him who is the fulness and source of all light.

It will be proper to provide the scholars with the best books relative to the doctrines which are taught them. The best way of studying Religion, is to make themselves well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, the Councils, and the Fathers. Such a course of study will prevent them from straying into the paths of error, and teach them to speak of Christianity in a manner worthy of the subject.

I have nothing farther to add, my Lord, but that a Professor of Theology should be equally learned and pious. Eternal truths should, as far as it is possible, be only heard from lips that are holy. There will result from thence a blessing from heaven upon the master, the scholars, and an odour of life upon the whole diocese. Italy has always had Theologians whose life kept pace with the purity of their Theology.

Excuse my temerity, my Lord, which would have been unpardonable, if your Eminency had not commanded me to give you my opinion.

I submit it wholly to your judgment, having the honour to be with the most perfect obedience, and the profoundest respect, &c.

ROME, 31st May, 1753.

## L E T T E R LXVII.

TO THE COUNT DE BIELK, A SENATOR OF  
ROME.

**I** WILL wait upon your most illustrious Lordship as soon as I possibly can, to examine the manuscript you did me the favour to mention. There is no place where a Monk can be more at his ease, than with your Excellency. He there finds delicious retirement, exquisite books, and your amiable conversation. There is nothing so agreeable in the commerce of life, as that  
philo-

philosophic liberty which shakes off servitude, elevates itself above grandeur, acts without constraint, and is governed by no rule but duty.

And yet you tell me that you are not happy. Alas! what is it you want to make you so? Those haughty Romans who formerly inhabited the Capitol where you reside, notwithstanding their reputation and philosophy, possessed not your tranquility;—they lived in the midst of tempests, and you are in the center of peace:—They were always in war, and Rome is now the city of which the Prophet speaks, *whose borders were peace: Qui posuit fines suos pacem.*

It is neither in riches nor in bustle that we can be happy; but in a well chosen society of books and friends. We are undone if humour or caprice gets possession of us;—they are our greatest enemies.

Your Excellency has such resources in your own mind, that you ought never to complain of listlessness. For my part, I have only a sort of dictionary knowledge of that evil. But if it was at any time



to intrude into my cell, I should soon find a remedy for it: I would come and profit by your knowledge, and often repeat to you the sentiments of respect and esteem with which I am, &c.

CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES.

## LETTER LXVIII.

TO COUNT \* \* \*.

**W**ELL, my dear friend, what are you doing? It is a long time since I saw you; I certainly do not deserve to be deprived of that pleasure. You know that I willingly quit my pen, my employment, and my books, when you come to see me.

They who come to visit us, have no occasion for our studies nor our business; and that is what very few recluses think of. They are only employed about themselves or their interest, when you meet them, without reflecting that they ought  
to

to dedicate themselves intirely to those who come to seek them.

I have always made it a law to receive every person well who honours me with a visit, even the man that comes to importune me:—it is sufficient that he is my neighbour. Now judge after this, if you will be well received.

It is almost eighteen days since I saw the little Abbé. I am afraid, but I dare not tell you that——The art of being silent is a great virtue:—happy they who say nothing but what they ought to speak! Accustom yourself to be secret, without affecting discretion:—a mysterious man is insufferable in society; and it requires little sagacity easily to penetrate the views of him who always appears to keep his mind to himself.

I am not reserved, but I make nobody my confident, with regard either to my correspondents or relations. Never employ finesse; it is a wretched resource, incompatible with probity, and easily discovered.

I have been already told who the lady is that is designed for you; and after the picture which has been given of her, as a

person who has neither false devotion, pretended modesty, nor fantastical humours. I think she will suit you.

I will tell you more when we meet ; but let it be soon, to-morrow, to-day, instantly. I am without reserve your servant and best friend, &c.

## LETTER LXIX.

TO R. P. CONCINA, A DOMINICAN.

**I**T is undoubtedly very strange, my reverend Father, that in an age so enlightened there should be Casuists to teach the abominations which you combat. They who find your zeal too bitter, do not know what Religion exacts, when morals and opinions are attacked. In such a case 'tis right to say to you: *Clama, ne cesses* †.

If the Church had never exclaimed with a loud voice, every sort of error would

† Cry without ceasing.

have

have stolen imperceptibly upon her; but whenever a heterodox or relaxed opinion started up, immediately the sacred trumpet was sounded, that Pastors might watch incessantly to stop the source of the evil.

Your work gave me a most sensible pleasure. I found it in that holy zeal which characterises the Fathers of the Church. I would very willingly come to see you; but your employments, like mine, prevent me from gratifying the inclination I should have, to assure you verbally of the respectful consideration with which I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 7th March, 1753.

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## L E T T E R LXX.

TO CARDINAL GENTILI.

MOST EMINENT,

**I** WILL attend exactly at the hour your Eminency hath appointed, being jealous of proving upon every occasion how much your orders are respectable in my sight.

fight. It will be impossible for me to bring the writing you mention, as it is not finished ; but I will endeavour to supply what is wanting from my memory. Sometimes it serves me very well. I am with the profoundest respect,

Your Eminency's, &c.

ROME, 7th March 1752.

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## LETTER LXXI.

TO MONSIGNOR ZALUSKI, GRAND REFERENDARY OF POLAND.

MY LORD,

**I** HAVE fruitlessly searched for the book you ask of me: it is neither in our library, nor in all Rome. It will require a sagacity equal to your own to be able to discover it: for what work is there which you have not dragged from its concealment? There is not a book in the world which does not owe you homage, or can escape your search.

You



You will perpetuate the honour which the Polish nation hath acquired at all times, by signalizing your uncommon erudition. We shall never forget Copernicus for Natural Philosophy, Hofius for Theology, Zaluski for History, Zamoiski for the *Belles-Lettres*, the Fathers of the Pious Schools for learning, and Sobieski for the art of war.

The library which you have made public, in concert with your illustrious brother the Bishop of Cracow, is filled with Polish writers, who distinguish themselves on every subject. It is a pity so celebrated a Republic should not encourage a love of science among its subjects, and that the spirit so natural to your worthy countrymen should remain uncultivated.

The wars, of which Poland has been so often the dreadful theatre, has made a number of Authors miscarry. They would have penned the productions of their genius with indelible ink, as they have written the proofs of their valour with their own blood.

Circum-

Circumstances almost always determine the fate of men :--one stifles his taste for the sciences by turning soldier ; another recommends himself by his learning, because he leads a private life ; and it is Providence which disposeth all for the best :  
*fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia.*

I wish, my Lord, that your love of books and science would inspire you with a desire to revisit Rome. You came formerly to be instructed ;---you will come now to give lessons, to receive the respects of all the world, and in particular those of

Your most humble, &c.

ROME, 9th July, 1755.

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## L E T T E R LXXII.

TO A MONK, ONE OF HIS FRIENDS,  
 APPOINTED A BISHOP.

AFTER having been an humble disciple of St. Francis, behold you have got into the rank of the Apostles ! It is sufficient to tell you, my dear friend,  
 that

that you ought not to raise yourself to dignity, except to be truly the servant of all; you ought not to shine, but by the lustre of your virtue.

There is not a dignity upon earth so formidable in the eyes of the Faith, as that of a Bishop. He must watch night and day over the Flock of Jesus Christ, and think that he is to answer at his tribunal for every stray sheep. He must renew himself, that he may not tire;—multiply himself, that he may be every where;—and be alone, that he may study and pray.

There are two things so essential for Bishops, that they cannot deserve the title, without possessing them in an eminent degree;—Purity, to render them like the Angels themselves, and which has procured them that name in the Holy Scriptures, as appears in the first chapters of the Revelations:—and Knowledge, which, the Gospel itself, intitles them to the honour of being called the *light of the world*. As men bearing an immaculate character, they ought not in the least to have their morals suspected; and are likewise obliged to preserve  
others

others from corruption; and are therefore called the *salt of the earth*. With respect to their learning, they ought to be *eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and the light of the world*. It is not sufficient that a Bishop be virtuous, and consult learned men to know what he shall do; he ought to be able to discern good from evil, and truth from error, for he is to judge of doctrines and morals; and if he does not possess a talent for judging, he will not have a talent for governing, and will be easily deceived.

What comforts me is, that you are solidly instructed, and that you will see All yourself; which is absolutely necessary, that you may not be the dupe of hypocrites or informers.

I do not doubt of your having already meditated seriously upon the Epistle of Paul to Timothy, and of St. Peter to all the Faithful. In the first, you must have seen that a Bishop ought to be irreprehensible, sober, chaste and peaceable; that he may not live like those Prelates whose history is exactly that of the rich man clothed

clothed in purple and fine linen, and who live every day in splendor, but leave Lazarus to die at their gate.

From the second you will have learned not to domineer over any Ecclesiastic under your care; for the spirit of Jesus Christ is not a spirit of dominion, but a spirit of gentleness and humility; so that a Bishop ought to look upon the Curates as his equals, in the order of christian charity, though they are not so in that of the Hierarchy. His house ought to be ever open to receive them.

Do not slightly dispense with your seldom preaching the word of God, remembering what St. Paul said, that *he was not sent to baptise, but to preach*. Manage so, that there be no Sacrament which you do not administer from time to time, to shew your Diocesans that you devote yourself to them in sickness or in health, at their births as well as at their deaths.

Above all, visit regularly the diocese which is intrusted to you, and take care that your visits be not like tempests which  
inspire



inspire terror, but like beneficent dews spreading chearfulness and fertility.

If you find by chance any of your assistants who have sinned, stretch over him the cloak of charity, to lead him back to his duty by gentleness, and to hide the scandal as much as possible. If it is a crime, engage him secretly to quit his situation, but secure a retreat for him before he leaves it.

I will not desire you to have a paternal tenderness for the Monks; That would be to offend you. You owe to them what you now are, and it was at their school that you, as well as I, learnt all that we know. Visit them often with cordiality; it is the way to excite a just emulation among them, and to make them respected. It is to do honour to one's self, to honour those whose lives are a continual labour. A general who should despise his officers, would deserve the greatest contempt himself.

Do not suffer the piety of the Faithful to be fed with false legends, nor to be occupied in petty observances; but teach them to instruct their flock to have recourse

course constantly to Jesus Christ, as our only Mediator, and to honour the Saints only in reference to him. The method of instruction is left to you, and you should know what they teach.

Do not easily consent to admit into Orders; because Italy abounds in supernumerary Priests, who carry their ignorance and poverty into foreign nations, debasing the dignity of the Priesthood, and dishonouring their country.

Give benefices which have a charge of souls, only to persons of acknowledged merit, especially in learning and piety; and pay attention to him who has long laboured, in preference to one newly ordained.

Associate with you for the government of your Diocese those only who have grown grey in the ministry, and whose age, as well as virtue, will give them authority. A Bishop is despised who has only young people for his society and council, because on every occasion they can influence his judgement. The Pope has  
only

only one Vicar General, and consequently one is sufficient for you.

Let the lowest of your titles be *my Lord*, and those of *Father* and *Servant* be much more dear to you; for *the fashion of this world passeth away*, and all grandeur with it.

In fine, while in the midst of riches and honours, do not receive more than is necessary to supply your wants, and make you respected; reflecting, that Saint Paul *kept his body in subjection*, and that every Christian ought to mortify himself.

Above all, I say, reside, and I say again, reside. A shepherd who keeps at a distance from his flock without reason, has no right to eat.

These are harsh truths; but as we cannot change them, you must either submit to them, or abdicate.

Let the poor be your friends, your brothers, and your companions. You cannot give too much. Alms-giving is one of the most essential obligations of a Bishop, and must be done in houses, in prisons, in public places, indeed every-where, to follow the steps of our Divine Saviour, who  
never

never ceased during his mortal life to do good. But give with chearfulness—*bilarem datorem diligit Deus* †—and give in such a manner that you become indigent yourself.

I say nothing to you about your domestic employments, convinced that you will divide your time between prayer, study, and the government of your Diocese. A Bishop never tires of reading the Scriptures and the Fathers, when he knows their value, when he doth not live in dissipation, and is sensible that a Bishopric is a formidable burden, and not a secular dignity.

Hear all the world, and make yourself popular after the example of our Divine Master, who allowed even little children to approach him, and spoke to them with the greatest goodness. Frequently visit those individuals of your Diocese who have met with any misfortune, that you may be their help and their comfort.

It is an odious thing in a Bishop to know none but those of rank and fortune

† God loveth a chearful giver.

in his Diocese. The lower people murmur, and with reason; for they are often more precious in the sight of God.

If there should be any dispute among the inhabitants of the town where your bishopric lies, instantly become a mediator. A Bishop should know no law-suits but those of other people, and labour to accommodate them.

Examine the Ecclesiastics, yourself, who apply for orders, and take care that they never be asked questions that are childish, or foreign to what they ought to know. Take care that your Confessors observe the Rules of St. Charles in the Tribunal of Penitence.

Do not, on pretence of business, fall into the habit of going but seldom to your Church. The Public will not be satisfied with such reasons; they desire to be edified; and who will pray to God, if the Bishop will not?

When you have thus filled up the measures of your time, you will find yourself surrounded with a multitude of good works at the hour of death. You know  
that



that they follow us into eternity, while pride, grandeur, and titles, are lost in the darkness of the grave, and leave a frightful void in the soul. Read often what is said to the Bishops described in the Revelations, and tremble.

I believe I have run over all the duties of a Bishop, in this letter;—it is for you to practise them. You have certainly said to yourself, and much better than I can, what I have just now reminded you of, but you called upon me for my counsels.—They proceed, I swear to you, from the most lively friendship and sincere desire to see you labour effectually toward your own salvation, in labouring for that of others. You are doubly obliged to it, both as a Monk and a Bishop.

I wait your being inducted, to write to you with more ceremony. Adieu! I embrace you with all my heart.

CONVENT of the HOLY APOSTLES,

30th May, 1755.

## LETTER LXXIII.

TO THE ABBE LAMI.

I AM enchanted with your last sheet. Your criticism is accurate, and it is thus you should censure, without impatience, caprice or partiality, according to the rules of justice and taste. Growing talents have often been discouraged by being judged with too much rigour. I do not know any one work, ancient or modern, which will not appear defective, if you are disposed to criticise every part of it. Authors have need of the indulgence of Reviewers; and Reviewers themselves, of the indulgence of the Public, because there is nothing absolutely perfect.

I am much obliged to you for the account you give us from time to time of French books. Those of the last age had more force, but those of the present are more pleasing. It is common enough to have the fine give place to the pretty; it is the diminutive which is derived from  
the

the substantive. Your eulogium of Cardinal Lancé is justly due to him. He edifies the whole Church by his shining virtues, and they are accompanied with an immense variety of knowledge. I should be delighted, if he lived at Rome;—I would endeavour to merit his approbation, in order to enjoy the benefit of his enlightened understanding. He is a pupil of the Congregation of St. Genevieve in France, so renowned for knowledge and piety, and wore the habit of that Order for some time.

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## L E T T E R LXXIV.

TO A GENTLEMAN OF TUSCANY.

**T**HE education you propose giving your children will be only a varnish, if it is not founded upon religion. There are some occasions in the course of life, where probity is not sufficiently strong to resist certain temptations, and where the

soul is debased, if it is not raised by the firm belief of Immortality.

It is necessary for the wisdom and happiness of man, that he should have a view of the Deity from his tenderest infancy, as the principle and the end of all things; and reason and faith should tell him, that it is descending to the rank of beasts to be without either worship or law: he should be made to know that Truth being one, there can be only one Religion; and if our belief was not determined by authority, every one would have his own system, and his own opinion.

It is not by an attention to trifling ceremonies that you will make your children true Christians. Christianity is the greatest enemy to Pharisaical zeal and superstition. The Church prescribes duties enough without our endeavouring to multiply them. We too frequently neglect what is precept, to follow what is only advice, because we love rather to hearken to caprice than to reason; and because pride and singularity perfectly agree.

You

You should take a great deal of pains to elevate the souls of your three young people, and to convince them, that the greatest pleasure of man is to reflect, and to be conscious of his existence. This is a pleasure so sublime, and so worthy of a heavenly spirit, that I look upon him who knows not this happiness, as a wretched, or, at least, an insensible being.

The Catechism is sufficient to teach revealed truths : but in an age of infidelity, something more is wanted than the Alphabet of Religion : You should therefore fill you children's minds with those pure lights which dissipate the clouds of modern philosophy, and the darkness of corruption.

A few but solid books will make your children well-informed Christians. Let them be read less with an intention to fix them in the memory, than to grave them on the heart. It is not necessary to form young people to defend a thesis, but to be obliged as rational creatures to convince themselves of eternal truths.



When youth have studied religion from its first principles, they seldom suffer themselves to be seduced by sophistry and impiety, unless the heart be intirely corrupted.

You should watch carefully to preserve them spotless, not by employing informers and spies, but by having your ears and your eyes every where to imitate the Deity whom we do not see, but who seeth over all.

The children should not perceive that they are distrusted and observed, for that will discourage them, and make them murmur; they will conceive aversion against those they ought to love, suspect an evil which they would not have thought of, and seek only to deceive:—Hence it is that all Scholars act only from fear, and are never more pleased than when at a distance from their Superiors.

Be less the master than the friend of your children; and then they will be transparent to your eyes, and even tell their faults themselves. Young folks have a hundred times told me their griefs and  
their

their errors, because I always treat them with mildness :—they will give you the key of their hearts, when they find that you sincerely wish them well, and that it is a pain to you to reprove them.

There are many reasons which induce me to advise a domestic education, and there are still more which hinder me from persuading you to it. Domestic education is commonly the best calculated to secure their morals ; but it presents such a sameness, it is so luke-warm and languid, that it discourages all emulation : besides, as they are watched too narrowly, they more frequently become hypocrites than good pupils.

Nevertheless, if you can find a Preceptor gentle, patient, sociable, and learned, who can unite condescension with steadiness, wisdom with gaiety, temperance with amiableness, I should desire you to make the trial, being persuaded that you will do nothing but in concert with him, and that you will not seek to controul him. There are too many Fathers who look upon a Preceptor as a mercenary, and illiberally

think they are his master, because he receives their wages.

Trust your sons only to a man upon whom you can depend as upon yourself; but after you have found such a man, do not hesitate to leave him entirely master. Nothing disgusts a Tutor so much, as distrust and a diffidence of his capacity. Take care what servants you admit about your children; it is generally through them that youth are corrupted.

Manage so as to have an amiable serenity constantly shining on your face and in your eyes, and that every thing be done as you would have it, without restraint or fear. Nobody loves a storm, but all the world rejoices in fine weather.

Attach pleasures to every kind of study which you propose for your sons, by exciting a keen desire of knowledge, and an ardent impatience of ignorance.

Take care that they have relaxation from their studies, that their memories and judgments may not grow tired. When disgust is joined with study, they  
conceive

conceive an aversion to books, and sigh after idleness and supineness.

Instruct them by making them love your documents, not by the fear of punishments ; and for this purpose take care to enliven them by some little histories or fallies, which may awaken attention. I knew a young man at Milan who became such a lover of study, that he looked upon holidays as necessary for relaxation, but considered them as days of sorrow : his books were his pleasure and his treasure. It was a good Priest who by gaiety, and the resources of his imagination, had inspired him with a love for works of taste and learning. He would have been one of the most learned men in Europe, if death had not stopped him in his career.

Adapt their studies to their times of life, and do not think of making them Metaphysicians at twelve years old: That is not educating young people, but teaching words to Parrots.

Learning is like food. The stomach of a child requires light nourishment ; and

it is only by degrees that he is accustomed to more solid or substantial diet.

Never fail to let an amusing succeed a serious book, and to intermix poetry with prose. Virgil is not less eloquent than Cicero; his descriptions, images, and expressions, give fancy and elocution to those who possess it not naturally. Poetry is the perfection of language; and if people do not apply to it while they are young, they never acquire a taste for it. It is impossible, after a certain age, to read verse long, without having a real taste for poetry.

Nevertheless, moderate the study of the Poets; for, besides that they very often take liberties contrary to good morals, it is dangerous to love them too much. A young man who only speaks and raves of verse, is insupportable in company; he is both a fool and a madman. I except those whose genius is only proper for essays or exercises of this kind; and then they are recompensed for this enthusiasm, by the honour of becoming like Danté, Ariosto,



osto, Tasso, Metastasio, Milton, Corneille, or Racine.

Let the history of the world, nations, and countries, be made familiar to your children, without becoming a dry study; it should be accompanied with short and precise reflections, to teach them how to consider events with judgment, and to acknowledge an Universal Agent, of whom all mankind are but the instruments, and all revolutions the combined and foreknown effects of his eternal decrees.

History is only an inanimate reading, if they attend only to the dates and facts; but it is a book full of life, if they observe the playing of the passions, the springs of the soul, the movements of the heart, and especially if they discover a God, who, always master of events, produces, directs, and determines them, according to his good pleasure, and for the accomplishment of his sublime purposes.

Our carnal eyes see in this world only a veil, which covers the actions of our Creator; but the eyes of faith shew us,

that whatsoever happens is from one cause, and that this cause is truly God.

Take care that a good Rhetorician gives a taste of true eloquence to your sons, rather by example than by precept. Make them comprehend, that what is really beautiful does not depend upon either modes or times; and that if there are different ways of expressing things according to different ages, there is only one of conceiving them properly.

Guard them against that childish eloquence, which, playing on words, is disgusting to true taste; and persuade them that no gigantic ideas or expressions ever enter into an elegant discourse. | Altho' we ought never to be sated of true eloquence, man is so fantastical as to be glutted with it; and it is owing to this, that we see a singular and trifling diction preferred to the commanding language of the orators of the last age.

There are men and periods of time which have established the standard of taste in every thing; and it is on their productions that the eyes of your children should

should be constantly fixed, as the best models; not, however, to make themselves slaves, for they should not be servile imitators of any person.

I love that the fancy should take wing, and act from itself, instead of being a copy for want of invention. We have men of fine parts; and we should have men of genius, if they did not too mechanically follow the beaten road. He knows little, who knows only one path. The spirit of invention is inexhaustible, when we dare make the attempt. I often tell young people who are under my care, "Be yourselves;--think in your own way." It is a melancholy thing to employ young people, for whole years, in learning nothing but the art of repeating.

When your children have acquired the age of maturity, then is the time to speak to them, as a friend, of the nothingness of the pleasures in which the world places its happiness; of the misfortunes in which they engage us; the remorse they excite; the injury they do both to body and soul;

the

the abyfs they dig under our ſteps, while they appear only to ſcatter flowers.

It will be no difficult matter for you to point out to them the dangerous rocks of ſenſuality, either by vigorous expreſſions, or ſtriking examples; and to perſuade them that without idleneſs, the greater part of the pleaſures to which people addiſt themſelves ſo immoderately, would have no attractions. In idleneſs, as in ſleep, they form to themſelves the moſt brilliant ideas, and repreſent a thouſand agreeable chimeras which have no exiſtence.

When a ſon is perſuaded that a father talks only reaſon to him, and ſolely from tenderneſs, he hearkens to him, and his advice produces the beſt effects.

Laſtly, after having erected this edifice, there ſtill remains what I look upon as the moſt difficult of all;—I mean, the choice of a profeſſion. This is commonly the touchſtone of fathers and mothers, and the moſt critical point for children.

If you will be perſuaded by me, you will give them a year to themſelves to reſlect

fect upon the kind of life that suits them, before you speak to them of one profession in preference to another. The good education they will have received, the knowledge they will have acquired, will naturally lead them to a happy issue; and there will be good reason to hope they will then decide for themselves, according to their inclinations, and according to reason.

It will then be necessary to speak frequently to them of the advantages and disadvantages of the different conditions of life, and to let them know how much their temporal and eternal interest is concerned in the faithful discharge of their duty. The sacerdotal and monkish professions furnish ample matter upon the inestimable happiness they must taste who are truly called to them; and the terrible calamities which they must experience, who have the rashness to embrace them without any but worldly views. The rank of an Officer or a Magistrate presents a multitude of duties to discharge; and it is sufficient to lay these duties before



fore them, to convince them of their importance.

After these precautions, and after having often implored the assistance of Heaven, your sons will enter resolutely upon the plan of Life they have chosen; and you will have the consolation of being able to say, before God and man, that you have regarded their inclinations and their liberty. Nothing is so fatal as for fathers to thwart the inclinations of their children; they expose them to perpetual repinings, and themselves to the most bitter reproaches, and even imprecations, which they have unfortunately deserved.

Since Providence has given you wealth, and you were born in a distinguished rank, you should support your sons according to their fortune and condition; letting them, however, always feel some wants, and keeping them always within the bounds of moderation, to teach them that this life is not the state of our happiness, and that the higher they are raised, the less ought they to become proud. Take care to give them money, that they may learn from yourself

self not to become misers, and that they may have it in their power to assist the unfortunate. It will be proper to observe with your own eyes, the use they make of it; and if you find them addicted either to avarice or prodigality, you should lessen their allowance.

Lastly, my dear and respectable friend, attend more to the hearts than the understandings of your sons: if the heart is good, all will go well.

Circumstances must teach you how to govern them; you should appear sometimes indulgent, at other times severe, but always just and candid. Those young people who will not be wise are distressed by a spirit of equity, because they find, against their inclination, that they cannot reply.

Leave them a liberal freedom, so that their father's house may not be their last choice; it is necessary that they should be happier there than elsewhere, and find those pleasures which may reasonably be expected from a parent who, though a friend to order, is indulgent from affection.

My

My pen hurries me on in spite of me;— as if it had sentiment, and relished the pleasure which I taste in speaking to you of your dear children, whom I love better than myself, and a little less than you. May God heap his blessings upon them, and they will be what they ought to be!—The education which you will give them, must blossom to eternity. There it is that parents reap the fruit of the good advice they have given to their children, and that worthy fathers find themselves, with their worthy sons, to be for ever happy.

ROME, 16th Aug. 1753.

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## L E T T E R LXXV.

TO THE PRELATE CERATI.

**I**F this letter was to carry all my sentiments, you would not find it a light one; for I would load it with all the esteem, all the attachment, and all the admiration I am capable of, to convince you, more than

than ever, how much I revere, and how much I love you.

I have seen the Augustine Monk whom you recommended to me, and have found him, as you told me, full of the Fathers of the Church. They are upon his lips, they are in his heart, and he is the man in the world that we can peruse with the greatest pleasure, when his full value is known. His hero is, with reason, St. Augustine, because he was an universal teacher, embracing all Science, and was singularly favoured by it. Excellent encomiums have been made upon that incomparable man; but he has not been praised as he deserves. Some time ago I advised an Ecclesiastic who consulted me about composing a panegyric on that great Saint, to say nothing of his own, but to extract all from the holy Father's writings, thinking that Augustine himself only was capable of praising St. Augustine worthily. He has followed my advice; and we have seen the most sublime and affecting passages of this great Teacher compose his eulogium. It was extremely well connected, though here and there

there interrupted with exclamations and ejaculations, which affected the audience.

—When will our Rhetoricians and our Preachers know that true eloquence does not consist either in being witty or elegant; but in an expression of the soul, an ebullition of the heart, which burns, astonishes, and works wonders?

There are certain moments where the great Orators seem neither to have style nor words, lest the sublimity should be altered by studied phrases.

There are people who put themselves into an *alembic* to be eloquent, and nothing issues from that operation but forced conceits and bombast phrases; whereas, if they would give themselves up to the energy of their hearts, they would have golden tongues.

I find nothing but elegance in almost all the writings of the times, and yet they are very far from being eloquent. Elegance pleases, but eloquence captivates; and when it is natural, it *amalgamates* itself with all the beauties of nature and genius, to shew them in all their lustre,  
and



and according to truth:—it is, in a word, such as that part of your composition which you shewed me some time ago, where I could see the true touch of Demosthenes, notwithstanding the immense interval which has passed from his time to your's.

Nothing is more admirable than to approach to the Ancients, and, notwithstanding the distance of time, to adhere strongly to them, as if you were their contemporary; for it must be confessed, that they have reaped all, and we come only to glean.

I was requested some time ago to compose a Scientific Discourse, which was to be placed at the head of a book of Geometry. I collected my whole force, and in the ebullition of a work which lasted more than a week, I thought I had produced something very interesting and quite new; but I cannot tell you how I was surprised and humbled to find all my thoughts scattered over a few pages of the Ancients. In the mean time I was no plagiarist; but the mind of man having only one circle, all generations

nerations nearly resemble each other in their manner of thinking, although the tints may considerably differ.

I have lately had a person, of the name of Sagri, presented to me, just come from the schools of Pisa;—he appears to have where-withal to make a considerable figure. But into what hands will he fall? The moment a young man leaves College, is the instant which decides his fate: and all either proves abortive, or all comes to good. I have seen some who have gained all the prizes, and have been mentioned with honour as true Coriphæus's, yet, notwithstanding all this emphatic admiration, have become less than nothing. They have been entangled by criminal pleasures, or engaged in mechanical employments; or their talents, after having made an effort, were exhausted by the laborious operation, and could produce nothing more. They are like too early fruit, which charms by the gaiety of the colours and the novelty, but is blighted at the moment you admire, and are disposed to gather it.

What a deal of trouble before the mind arrives at perfection! All that I know is, that mine thinks it has gained it, when it shares with yours by a communication of ideas, and that it puts me in a situation to repeat my sentiments of attachment and respect, &c.

ROME, 27th Aug. 1754.

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L E T T E R LXXVI.  
TO CARDINAL QUIRINI.

MOST EMINENT,

**T**HE different reflections which your Eminency has made upon the different ages that have pass'd from the beginning of the world, are worthy of such a genius as yours. I think I see Reason weighing all these ages, some like ingots, others like leaves of tinsel. In fact, there are some so solid, and others so light, that they make the most astonishing contrast. Our's, without contradiction, is more marked than any other by its lightness; but

but it pleases, it seduces, especially by the good offices of the French, who have given it an elegance, which, in spite of us, we find agreeable.

The Ancients would have murmured, and with reason ; nevertheless, if they had lived in our times, they would have suffered themselves to be led away as we are, and been as well amused with our trifling discourse and airy writings.

The antient Roman taste and correctness might not perhaps have relished such slight compositions ; but the Romans of these days are not so nice as formerly. French elegance has passed the Alps, and we have received it with complacency, at the very moment we were criticising it.

Your Eminency, who loves the French, has certainly looked with a forgiving eye upon their *prettiness*, though it might have offended the superior taste of the ancient manners. There is no evil but may be found collectively in all ages ; there are sparks and flames, lillies and blue-bottles, rains and dews, stars and meteors, rivers and rivulets, which is a perfect pic-

ture of nature; and to judge of the world and of times, you must unite the different views, and make but one piece of the whole.

The ages do not all resemble one another; it is their variety which helps us to judge; without this difference there would be no comparing. I know we should prefer living in an age which presented nothing to the view but what was great; but we must take the times as they come, and not continually regret the past, in being tied to the chariot-wheels of the Ancients. Let us endeavour to preserve their taste, and we shall have nothing to fear from our own futility.

We cannot look without horror upon the gulph from whence the times issue, and that into which they are precipitating. What a number of years, months, days, hours, minutes, and seconds, are absorbed by eternity, which is always the same, and remains immoveable in the midst of changes and revolutions! It is a rock in the midst of the Sea, against which the waves beat in vain. We are



but like grains of sand, with which the wind sporteth, if we do not attach ourselves immoveably to that point of support. It is there your Eminency hath cast anchor, and which has made you undertake so many learned writings that all Europe admires, and religion applauds.

I never am tired with reading the account of your travels, especially the descriptions you have given of Paris and France. Besides that the Latin may be compared with that of St. Jerome, there are admirable reflexions on every thing which your Eminency has met with. What a penetrating eye is your's! It searches the essence of things, the substance of writings, and the souls of the writers. You have had the happiness to see several great men at Paris who are still alive, the precious remains of the age of Louis XIV. and who must have convinced you that that age has not been exalted beyond its merit.

Nothing opens the mind so much as travels; I read them as much as I can, that I may make my thoughts range, tho'

my body is sedentary. What I am certain of is, that I am often in idea at Brescia, that town which your Lordship enriches by your example and precepts, and where you hourly receive homage, to which I unite, with all my soul, the profound respect with which I am, &c.

ROME, 10th Dec. 1754.

## L E T T E R LXXVII.

TO CARDINAL BANCHIERI.

MOST EMINENT,

**I** HAVE not yet seen the person from Ferrara whom your Eminency deigned to recommend to me; but I have nevertheless announced him to the Keeper of the *Ara Cæli*, who will do every thing in his power to prove to you how much the interest you seem to have in this person, is dear to him.

I wish my employments would allow me to take a journey to Ferrara, that town so celebrated for many events, and

which has the happiness to possess your Eminency, and the ashes of Ariosto. My first care would be to go and visit them. Some poetic sparks would issue forth and seize me, and enable me to assure you in verse, as well as in prose, that nothing can equal the profound respect with which I am, &c.

ROME, 7th January, 1755.

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## LETTER LXXVIII.

TO A CANON OF MILAN.

SIR,

**A** PANEGYRIC on Saint Paul is no small undertaking. It requires a soul equal to the Teacher of the Gentiles, to celebrate him in a manner worthy of him. His eulogium is the eulogium of Religion; they are so essentially united, that they cannot be praised separately.

You find in this great Apostle the same spirit, the same zeal, and the same charity. How rapid should your pen be, if

you would describe his Travels and Apostolical Labours! He flies as swift as thought, when he is about to undertake a good work; and breathes nothing but Jesus Christ, when he preaches the Gospel. One would believe, by the manner in which he multiplies himself, that he alone formed the whole Apostolical College: he is at the same instant on land and sea, always watching for the salvation of the Faithful, always desiring the palm of martyrdom, always pressing forward to eternity. Nobody was so good a citizen, so good a friend; he forgot nothing; he remembered the smallest services that were done him, and his heart did not once palpitate, but with a desire for Heaven, which enlightened him; or with a movement of love for Jesus Christ, who converted him; or with an act of acknowledgement to those Christians who assisted him.

Panegyric, in general, is a kind of writing which should not resemble a sermon; it should lighten, but the flashes should burst from a fund of morality,

which should be the basis of the discourse. They do not instruct who only praise; and they do not celebrate their Hero, who confine themselves solely to instruct.

The skill of the Orator consists in producing from the bosom of the eulogium shining reflexions, which should have in view the reformation of morals. But above all things, my dear Friend, take care that you do not make a panegyric for one Saint at the expence of another; nothing can better prove the sterility of the Orator. Every illustrious person has his merit, and it is an insult to the memory of one servant of God, who looked upon himself as the lowest of all, to raise his glory to the prejudice of another.

Let there be no digressions foreign from your subject. Do not lose sight that it is St. Paul whom you mean to praise, and it is to miss your aim, if you attach yourself to any thing but his eulogium.

No languors are to be excused in Panegyric;—all ought to be rapid, and especially in that of the great Apostle, whose zeal was always active. Your audience  
should



should believe they see and hear him, that they may say, "It is he, behold him." You should, like him display all the powers of grace; like him, discomfit all those who would lessen the absolute dominion of God over the heart of man; and like him, thunder against the false Prophets, and the corrupters of morals. And in the end, you should give a succinct account of his different Epistles, and present them burning with the flames of Charity, and radiating with the lights of Truth.

No forced comparisons should here have place; they ought to rise out of the subject:—no useless words be admitted—every sentence should be instructive; no bombast phrases—they ought to be all natural. Your heart should be the Orator in this discourse, and not your imagination: reserve your rhetorical flights for the Academies, when you are to pronounce an Eulogium there; but the dignity of the Pulpit, the sanctity of the Temple, the eminence of the subject, in fine the Panegyric of Paul, are all superior to antitheses.

Human eloquence is intended to praise human actions; but divine eloquence is requisite to celebrate divine men. It is not among the Poets that you should gather flowers to crown the Elect, but from among the Prophets. I am more than I can tell, &c.

ROME, 13th Oct. 1755.

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## L E T T E R LXXIX.

TO THE ABBE LAMI.

**I** CANNOT join in your opinion, my dear Abbé, of the book you have criticised with so much severity. I do not think so indifferently of it as you do. There are principles, views, and beauties in it, which render it interesting. Some negligences of style do not disfigure a book altogether. The style is only the bark; and sometimes the tree may be good, though the bark is good for nothing. Unfortunately, in this age, we are less attached

tached to things than to words. The diction too often determines the fate of a book. I have run over a multitude of Pamphlets printed at Paris, which had nothing in them but a rapid and seducing style. One is obliged to ask himself what the Author meant to say, and yet he does not know. It is not surprising, that in a country where they are so singularly fond of dress and tinsel, they should be pleased with a production whose outward appearance constitutes all its merit.

There are some subjects that of themselves are sufficient to captivate the attention; while there are others which will not be regarded, without the passport of a brilliant style. An able Writer should attend to this difference.

I shall be very glad if you will analyse two different works which have just appeared here; *Conversation with One's-self*, and *The Elements of Metaphysics*. The first is singularly interesting, as it elevates the soul upon the wreck of the passions and senses. The second is not less so, as

it tends to render its spirituality and immortality demonstrable. These are two metaphysical productions differently presented: the *Conversation* with a clearness which makes it universally understood; the *Elements* with a depth which prevents its being generally read.

I look upon your Papers as an alarm-bell, which prevents our Italians from sleeping over Literature and the Sciences. In a warm climate there is need of being frequently roused, in order to study. The mind slumbers like the body, if we do not take care to spur it up, and in that state we have neither spirit to read nor to think.

Florence was always renowned for learning and taste, and I am not afraid of the Florentines degenerating while you continue to instruct them. A periodical work executed with discernment, gives light to the understanding, supports emulation, and makes up for the want of perusing a multitude of works, which we have not time to read, or means to procure.

When

When I read a journal which gives account of the productions printed in Europe, I learn to know the genius of the different Nations, and I perceive that an Englishman does not write like a German, nor think like a Frenchman. This national difference, which distinguishes the people by their manner of writing and thinking, persuades me that the moral world is a copy of the natural one, and that there are minds like faces, which have no sort of resemblance.

Adieu. I leave you to throw myself among the thorns of controversy, where I certainly shall not find the flowers which I perceive in your writings.

ROME, 5th Nov. 1755.



## L E T T E R   LXXX.

TO A CURATE OF THE DIOCESE OF RIMINI.

**I**T is with great rashness, my dear Pastor, that you judge your father, mine, the Father of all the Faithful, the great Lambertini, for whom all the churches have the greatest veneration. Besides his being celebrated for his extensive and sublime knowledge, for his penetrating genius, for his consummate prudence; he is the chief of our religion, the Sovereign Pontiff, of whom we cannot speak any ill without blasphemy. You are not ignorant of St. Paul's having begged pardon of the High Priest of the Synagogue, although it was expiring, because he had called him a *whited wall*.

The treaty which Benedict XIV. made with Spain, that the Spanish Clerks should come no more to Rome, has prevented, I do not know how many, young Ecclesiastics from being vagabonds and leading licentious lives. Nothing is more proper  
than

than to see those who are destined for the Ministry studying under the eyes of their own Bishops, who learn to know them, and do not lose sight of them.

Besides, there are so many reasons required for judging a Sovereign with equity, that if we do not know what passes in the Cabinets of Princes, the nature of events, the consequences which an affair may have, and if even we cannot penetrate the souls of those who act themselves or employ others to do so, we cannot form any judgment but an unjust one.

Alas!—who are we who condemn the Vicar of Christ; and, above all, while we are ignorant of the motives of his proceedings, or without knowing what he could foresee? In every kind of business, prejudice should be in favour of the Judge. How can they be justified who take the liberty, on slight appearances, to blame the conduct of the Sovereign Pontiff? This is undoubtedly to give arms to the Protestants, and to fail essentially in the respect that is due to him whom God has established upon a throne, to see  
and

and to judge; and whom he hath ordained that we should hearken to, as to himself; I say more, it is to risk salvation.

There is not a circumstance, nor a moment, that our hearts or opinions should be capable of rising up against the proceedings of the Sovereign Pontiff, unless we are of his Council. He sees what you cannot see; and if he does not account to us, it is because he is bound by considerations which withhold both his tongue and his pen. There is a Christian policy, which, without injuring truth, does not declare the whole of it; and which envelops itself in a prudent reserve, when it is proper to keep silence. How can you preach to your Parishioners the respect due to the Head of the Church, if they hear you yourself declaim against him? Suppose even that he has done amiss, you ought, as a Christian, as a Priest, as a Pastor, to excuse him in public, and impose an eternal silence on those who would dare to attack him. These are my sentiments with regard to Sovereign Pontiffs. They are the anointed of the Lord, the Christs, of whom.

whom we never should speak ill: *Nolite tangere Christos meos, & in Prophetis meis malignari* \*.

I flatter myself that you will get the better of this prejudice, and that you will approve my reasons, because you have a reasonable mind and a good heart. It is an effervescence of the imagination which led you to condemn Benedict XIV. whose proceedings are weighed in the scales of justice, and even in the sanctuary of truth.

I embrace you, my dear Pastor, and am, &c.

ROME, 14th May, 1755.

\* Touch not my anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.

LET-

## L E T T E R L X I.

TO MR. MEKNER, A PROTESTANT GENTLEMAN.

**I** AM sorry, my dear Sir, to hear you perpetually repeating a multitude of objections which have been employed against the Church of Rome, and which M. Bossuet, a French Bishop, has demolished in his Exposition of the Catholic Faith, and in his excellent work on the Diversity of Opinions. It is impossible to follow the track of a Protestant, because instead of waiting an answer to his question, he proposes a new one, and never gives time to breathe.

If you speak to me all at once of Purgatory, the Eucharist, and the worship of Saints, it is impossible for me to reply to three points at one instant. A controversy should be carried on in a rational manner, if we would understand it; and, consequently, it is necessary that one sub-  
ject



ject be examined to the bottom, before you pass to another. Without that, we strike the air, and shall have the fate of all wranglers, who, after having disputed, end with remaining obstinate in their original opinions.

You are satisfied with the plan I have laid down, to prove all the truths which you contest by the Gospel, and by the Epistles of St. Paul, which you receive as inspired works, and to shew you that uninterrupted tradition hath always taught them.

If it was otherwise, you should know the day and the date when we made the innovation; at least, if you would not persuade us that the whole Church, in the twinkling of an eye, notwithstanding its members are dispersed all over the world, did change its belief without perceiving it. What an absurdity!

The reproaches which you are constantly making against the Romish Church, my dear Sir, on the celibacy prescribed to the Priests, and on the cup which is withheld from the faithful in partaking of the  
 holy

holy mysteries, fall of themselves, when we think that marriage and the priesthood are united daily among the Greek Catholics; and there also they give the faithful the Communion in both kinds.

Return to the Church in good faith, and the Pope, who governs at present, will not reject you from his bosom, because you have ministers who are married, and because you desire the use of the cup. His prudence will find a modification which will grant you all that he can grant, without altering opinions and morals, but only changing the discipline, which has at all times varied.

Cardinal Quirini, whose zeal for your return consumes him, will be your mediator with the Holy Father. In returning to the Pope, you will return to him who was formerly your Chief, for it is you who have withdrawn. The abuses which reigned at that time in the Church, *because it is necessary*, as Jesus Christ said, *that there be scandals and heresies*, cannot absolutely authorise your ancestors in revolting and separating

paring themselves. They had no other method but that of remonstrating; and if they had stopped there, without mixing either sourness, gall, or a spirit of rebellion, they would certainly have obtained some reform. To heal some tumors in the body, we neither think of mutilating or smothering it.

Many Protestants would return, if they were not withheld by wretched worldly reasons; for it is impossible but in reading the Holy Scriptures so often as they do, they must perceive the prerogatives of the chief of the Apostles, and the infallibility of the Church, which can never teach any error; and the more so, as Christ is truly with her, even to the consummation of time, without interruption: *Omnibus diebus vitæ, usque ad consummationem sæculi.*

There need but eyes to see whether the Romish or the Protestant Church is right. The one appears to be that Holy Mountain, of which the Scripture speaks;  
and

and the other, a vapour which dims the sight, and has no solidity.

I would give the last drop of my blood, my dear Sir, to see you all reunited to us again, being certain that you have broken the chain which tied you to the centre of unity, and that you are no longer but solitary beings, without compass, guide, or chief.

God makes you feel it in the most terrible manner, in giving you up to I don't know how many errors, which form almost as many different sects as there are communions : and that circumstance proves to us, that since there is no longer an authority to unite the Faithful, they trust to their own judgments, and are led away by prejudice.

Do not imagine that I mean to insult your situation. Alas ! every thing tells me that you have the good faith ; but that will not justify you before God, who requires a strict examination upon so essential an article ; and the more so, as no one is more capable of judging than you are yourself.

The

The sentence which one pronounces against one's self, when in the wrong, is the best reproof, and is worthy of your candid soul and good heart. Your candour promises me, that you will inform yourself of the truth, and will not reject it when you see it. It is upon the lips of good Catholics, and in hearing them, you hear it. I desire it in all the fullness of my heart, by the sincere ardour I have to find myself with you in the dwelling of peace, where there will be only those who are marked with the sign of the Faith. Judge by that of the extent of attachment with which I have the honour to be, &c.

ROME, 14th May, 1753.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.







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